

The Reliquary
&
Illustrated Archæologist.

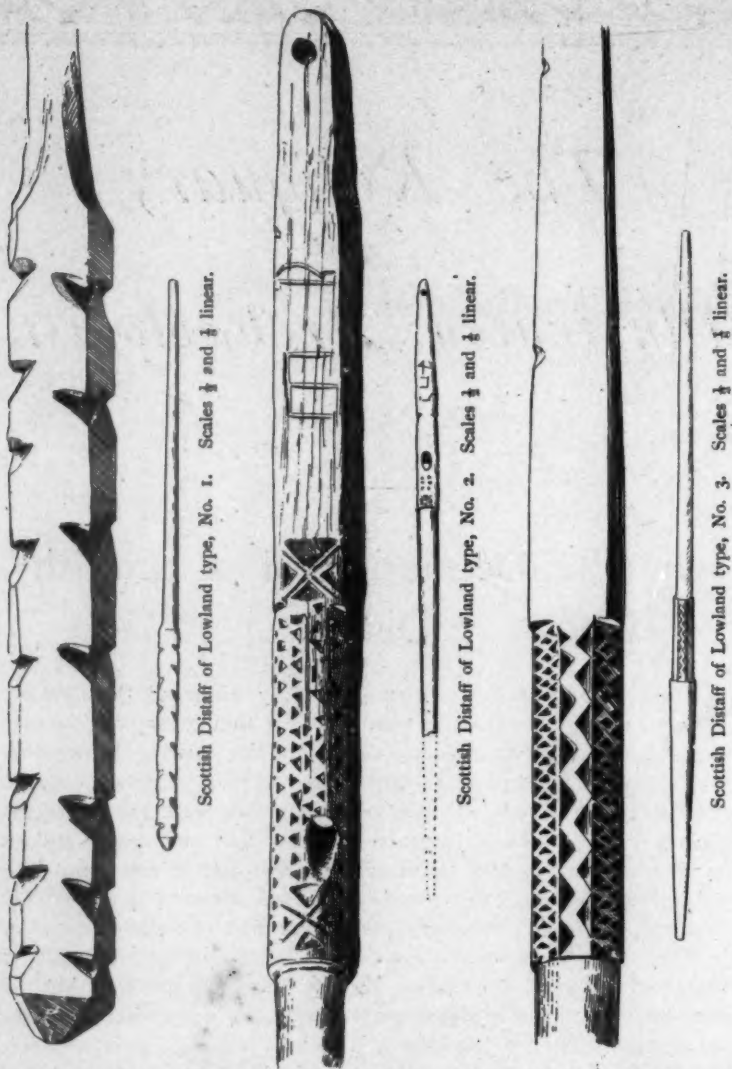
JANUARY, 1899.

On the Decoration of a Scottish
Distaff.

SO little does the nineteenth century know of the formerly quite national art of hand-spinning that it may not be rash to hazard the opinion that, were the drawings illustrating these notes placed before a score of even fairly enlightened students of antiquities, not two could name or state the use of the objects drawn. Twenty years ago, few but the most zealous antiquaries knew or had heard of the distaff and spindle; and it is only since then, that the Scottish National Museum has gradually acquired a collection, which, in this department of archæology, may in every sense be regarded as unique. That the interest attaching to the art of spinning is universal may be taken for granted; but the local interest centred in the specialised types of decoration belonging to any one country is the subject at present in hand. It is proposed, therefore, to review the specimens of spinning implements contained in our museum, beginning with the distaff, and leaving the spindle and the whorl for future consideration.

2 *On the Decoration of a Scottish Distaff.*

In Scotland, as far as the distaff is concerned, there are two well-marked types of decoration, the Highland and the Lowland ; and



although specimens of the latter group may vary considerably in details, there is no possibility of confusing these two types.

In the illustrations subjoined, the upper figure shows the decorated portion of the distaff one-half the actual size, and the lower figure the whole implement on a scale of one-eighth.



GROUP I.—LOWLAND TYPE.

No. 1.—This is the plainest example. It measures 2 ft. 3 ins. in length, has a four-square butt, which, for a space of 10 ins., is

deeply notched into eight unequal divisions, this notching and the tapering of the plain handle being evidently done with an ordinary clasp-knife.

No. 2.—Also rudely carved; but the thick end consists of a squared and a roundedly octagonal portion, the



Scottish Distaff of Lowland type, No. 7. Scales $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ linear.



Scottish Distaff of Lowland type, No. 8. Scales $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ linear.



Scottish Distaff of Lowland type, No. 9. Scales $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ linear.

latter receiving the decoration of triangles of various sizes, while on the otherwise plain surface of the former a curiously-shaped M R is slightly cut. There is a knot-hole near the middle of the carved portion, and a hole for suspension at the tip. The entire surface of this distaff is exceedingly well polished, as if by long and constant use. Length, if complete, 2 ft. 6 ins.

No. 3 exhibits further advance in the style of the cutting, with its decorated portion only in the middle. On the upper edge of the rectangular butt are two clean-cut small notches, which we may compare presently with similarly placed marks or notches upon other specimens. The eight sides of the decorated portion are very distinct. Length 2 ft. 10 ins.

No. 4.—The cutting in this is still rude, but shows more design than the last specimen. The decorated piece is divided into two sections, 7 ins. and 4 ins. long respectively, triangles and diagonals alternating. There are in addition narrow letters which may be meant to read N S I I. Length 2 ft. 9½ ins. With this distaff is a spindle of dark oak, quite plain, neatly tapering, but having, instead of the usual crochet needle hook, only a faint ring cut round near the point.

No. 5.—A fine specimen, having, besides very regular and symmetric decoration of the usual triangle form, the one feature which in these distaffs is so well marked—the through-cutting in the butt with its wooden pellets left in the groove as a triumph of skilful use of the tools employed. I am not sure whether in this specimen and one other, the piece of wood forming the groove has not been neatly sawn out altogether, the pellets then inserted, and the piece deftly put in again. Dr. Joseph Anderson is of opinion, however, that if this was done, it was due to bungling, and that the shaping of the pellets within the groove and so leaving them was really the orthodox and the easier method. This distaff is dated 1747. It is of further interest, also, because it exhibits, in combination with the triangle notch decoration, a space filled in (close to the date) with large parallel angular lines, which, if completed, would form diamond patterns, of the same type as those essentially belonging to the Highland distaff, No. 11. Length 2 ft. 7¼ ins.

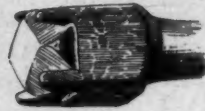
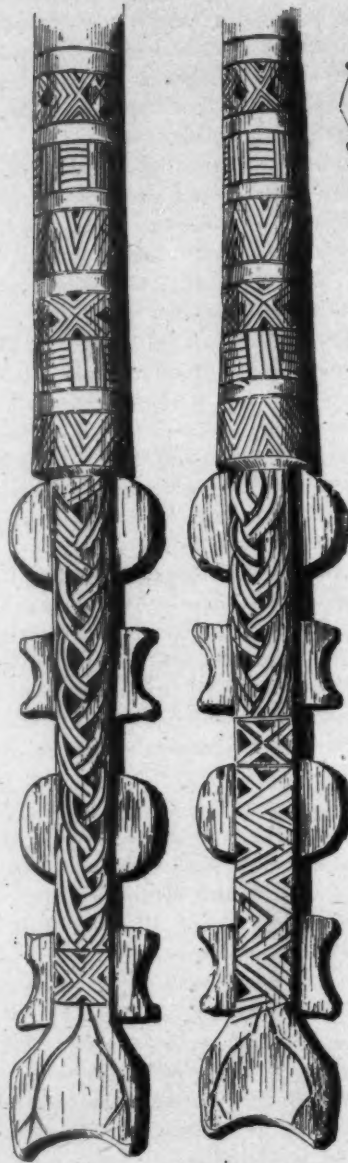
No. 6.—Of the same class as the previous specimen, with more minute carving, the date 1733, the initials E M in copper inlets, and a puzzling symbol slightly but carefully incised on one face of the butt. The middle portion is octagonal. Length 2 ft. 10 ins. This distaff is from Carlisle, Lanarkshire.

No. 7.—This beautiful specimen is elaborately carved for over

6 *On the Decoration of a Scottish Distaff.*



Scottish Distaff of Lowland type, No. 10. Scales $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ linear.



Scottish Distaff of Lowland type, No. 11. Scales $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ linear.

1 ft. 3 ins., and has a particularly long under-cutting with six pellets, the space below being elegantly narrowed into four incuse ovals, with a slight floral pattern on each face. The octagonal part also is curved down from the square with more grace than usual, and the tapering of the handle is very carefully done. Length 3 ft. 1½ ins.

No. 8.—The decoration on this very distinctive example, though still of the same general character as that of the others, has several special features. It runs throughout the length of the octagonal portion, leaving only a short handle of two sections uncarved save for a nail notch, and the initials and date, A I D, 1737. The carving is deeper than usual, and the dainty little "leaflets" which set off the longer triangular spaces are very deftly cut. The distaff has been broken and carefully mended in two places. Length 2 ft. 2½ ins.

No. 9.—This very highly-finished specimen, which shows designs of the same type as the last, but executed with still greater precision, variety, and skill, presents some entirely new points. At the broad end, below the pierced head-piece, are two "collars," followed by a cube, three sides of which bear the initials M H A, and the fourth the date 1759. A handle three inches long, carved like a cable, links the initialed part to the four-sided stem, each side of which is differently carved. In addition, like Nos. 3 and 10, this distaff has been marked off (see the small arrows under the uppermost figure) at certain spaces in such a manner as to indicate that it was used as a measure. The spaces thus marked off agree in the three specimens noted. In No. 9 the marks are fitted in with narrow brass inlets; and its entire length, 1 ft. 6½ ins.—half the Scottish ell—confirms its use as a measure.

No. 10.—This is perhaps the most elegant specimen of the whole group, and, in respect of its decoration, stands alone. It is of dark mahogany, carved with great care, under-cut and inlaid with small bars, squares, oblongs, and discs of ivory, the stem being further inlaid with three hearts and a thistle, and six vertical measure-marks. The other three sides of the stem are void of ornament, but the butt has the same inlaid decoration on each side, and the tapering end is tipped with ivory. Length 1 ft. 6 ins. Considering the peculiarity of the style of decoration, the inlaid work outweighing the carving, and also the fact that 1 ft. 6 ins. is the exact third of the French ell (which was six quarters), it is quite likely that this pretty distaff should be attributed to a French source rather than a purely Scottish one.

8 *On the Decoration of a Scottish Distaff.*

No. 11.—Unique specimen of the Highland distaff, from Ceana-monie, Loch Alsh. The parallel triangles and the horizontal bands of this remarkable example are cognate with the decoration we usually find on the brims and sides of the sepulchral urns of the Bronze Age, while its interlaced work is a reminiscence of that of the sculptured stones. The two sides of the butt, on a superficial glance so similar, are by no means identical in design; each, however, is furnished with the stag's horn. The spindle, with red worsted on it, belonging to this distaff, is attached to it by a string; its carved head is here shown. The distaff, 2 ft. 6½ ins. in length, has been much polished and worn by use and the effects of the peat-reek.

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On Some Interesting Essex Brasses.

OF all our English Counties, none, we believe (with the possible exception of Kent), is richer in the number, variety, and interest of its monumental brasses than the great home county of Essex. It is true that this preponderance is due in part to its large size; but, even making allowance for this, the position held by Essex is, relatively to other counties, very near the top of the list.

We have been for many years engaged in collecting materials for a work on "The Brasses of Essex," and have now got together rubbings of no fewer than about four hundred and seventy-five brasses¹ of all kinds and dates, including simple inscription-plates; while we have notes of nearly half as many more, of the former existence of which the earlier county historians and other writers make mention. Furthermore, there are few of the four hundred and odd churches in the county which do not contain one or more matrices, most of them in a worn and defaced condition, from which brasses were torn, either in the insensate days when Puritanism was rampant or in the later, but almost equally unenlightened and destructive, Georgian days, when brasses were ruthlessly torn up and either sold to defray church expenses or melted down and recast into bells. Some of our finer churches (as, for instance, those of Saffron Walden and Horrichurch) must, indeed, have been at one time almost paved with slabs bearing monumental brasses, of which, in most cases, the matrices alone now remain. It seems probable that the brasses which have existed at one time or other in our Essex churches may be numbered by the thousand, and that those we still have are little more than a tithe of them.

From among those Essex brasses which still exist, we have selected ten for reproduction here. Those chosen are of widely different dates and styles, and they have been gathered from all parts of the county. They cannot be said to rank among our finest,

¹ In this number, we have included about a couple of dozen of the existence of which we know, but of which we have not, as yet, actually secured rubbings.

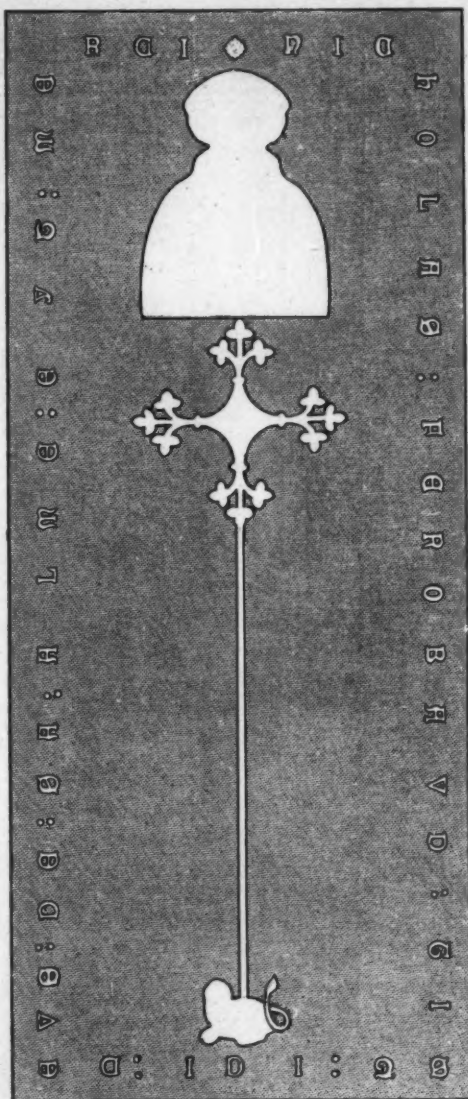
earliest, or most interesting examples—most of which are already well known from illustrations published by others. They have been selected chiefly because each is a more or less good and characteristic example of some special kind, and because none of them have been previously reproduced, or only very inadequately. It will be convenient to treat of them in the order of their dates, though, owing to the fact that they are of such varied kinds, few of them present points comparable with those of any other.

The two designs to be noticed first are of closely similar style and date. Strictly, it would be more correct to say that they *were* similar, for no fragment of either now exists; but, from their matrices (which are still in excellent condition), one is able to gather a very good general idea of the original design. Both brasses were laid down within a few years of the beginning of the fourteenth century, and are of a kind which is little known and has been very seldom figured. We have in Essex, perhaps, a score of slabs showing matrices of similar brasses, most of them in churches not far from the sea or the Thames (as at Hornchurch, Stifford, Corringham, and North Ockendon), and all of them completely despoiled of the interesting brasses which they once contained, except the example at Hornchurch, which still retains two letters in brass. The distinguishing feature of all these slabs is a brief marginal inscription in old Norman-French, and in ancient "Lombardic" characters, each letter being cut out of brass and let separately into a matrix of its own, the words being divided by colons. In most cases, a narrow fillet of brass borders the inscription both within and without. The legend (which always begins with a cross in the centre at the top, and runs round the four sides of the stone) is intended to be read from the inside. It merely states that so and so rests here, and ends with a supplication. A date is seldom given. Often there is no central design, but sometimes the inscription encloses an elegant cross-flory supported by a tall slender shaft, which rises from the back of some animal, and a half-length effigy of the person commemorated is occasionally added above or beside the cross. Brasses of this description appear never to have been securely fixed in their matrices by means of rivets, as were later brasses, but were simply bedded in a hard pitch-like cement, a good deal of which still remains, after the lapse of five centuries, in the incised lines of most of our Essex slabs. This accounts for the fact that no more than two single letters of one inscription now remain in Essex. The ease with which the portions of the design might be detached from the stone must, indeed, have become apparent very early. It probably accounts for the fact that

the laying down of brasses of this kind was quickly discontinued. After about the year 1340, inscriptions were always engraved on fillets or plates of brass, which were securely riveted into their matrices in the stone, as were also the other portions of the design, whether effigies, floriated crosses, or shields of arms. Brass-rubbers, intent on adding fine and showy figures to their collections, have very generally neglected these slabs; but they ought not on any account to be passed over carelessly, as has generally been done hitherto; for the matrices they contain are all that now remains of some of our very earliest brasses, and have a very marked character of their own.

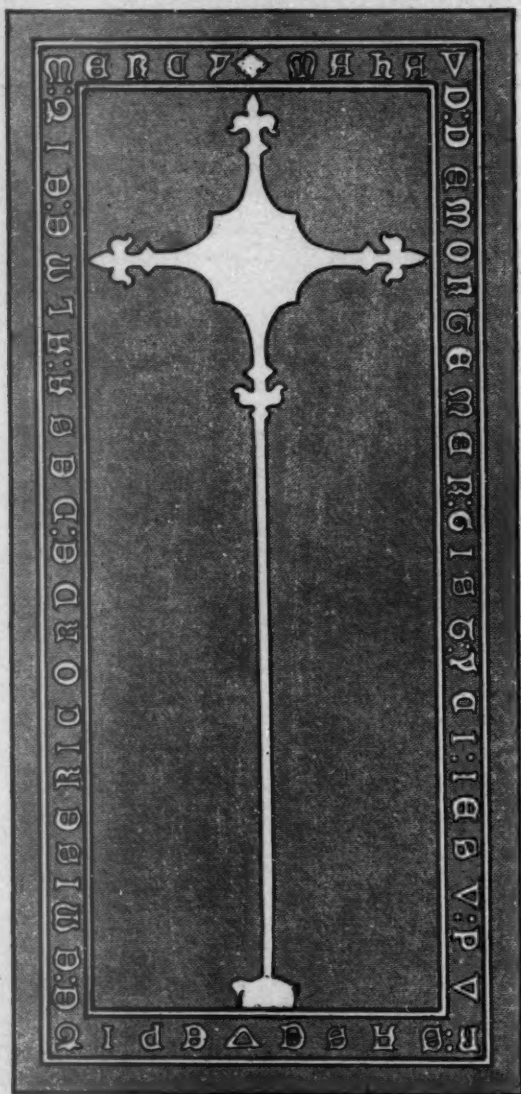
The two examples selected for illustration here both belong to about the year 1315, and display crosses.

The finest of the two, at West Tilbury commemorates Nicholas Ferobaud, a priest, of whom nothing is known. He was very likely a founder of the Church, as he lies buried at the east end of the chancel, beneath



Matrix of Brass of Nicholas Feroaud, about 1315, at
West Tilbury.

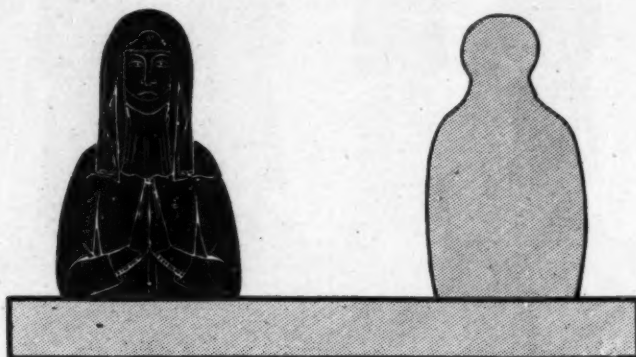
the altar. His memorial slab is of large size, measuring 7 ft. 11 ins. by 3 ft. 4 ins. Round its margin (unenclosed, in this case, by fillets),



Matrix of Brass of Mahaud de Mortemer, about 1315, at Tilty.

in letters each $1\frac{1}{2}$ ins. high, runs a legend which may be translated :—
"Nicholas Ferobaud lies here. May God upon his soul have mercy." The elegant cross flory in the centre is 5 ft. 4 ins. in total height, and its shaft rests upon the back of a lion couchant. Immediately above the cross is a large half-length effigy of the ecclesiastic, 1 ft. $9\frac{1}{4}$ ins. in height.

The second of the two is at Tilty, where it lies in the central aisle of the nave. It commemorates a certain Mahaud de Mortemer, probably a Prior of Tilty, though no prior of that name is recorded. The marginal inscription (one word in which we have not been able to decipher) may be thus translated :—"Mahaud de Mortemer lies here. May Jesus, of his — (?) pity and grace, on his soul have mercy." It is enclosed by narrow fillets, each about a quarter of



Brass of Isabel and John Clonville, 1361, at West Hanningfield.

an inch in width. The cross flory occupies the whole of the central space, the effigy of the deceased having probably, in this case, been represented in the space in the centre of the head of the cross. It is 5 ft. 10 ins. in total height, and in design is slightly different from, though it is not less elegant than, that noticed above. It rises from the back of what is apparently an elephant, but without its "castle."

The next brass to be noticed may be regarded as belonging to the type which immediately succeeded the foregoing. The effigies of this type are still commonly half-length, but the inscriptions, instead of being marginal and consisting of single letters, are engraved upon a plate placed immediately below the effigies. The brass in question, which is at West Hanningfield, near Chelmsford, and is the only example of its class now remaining in Essex, commemorates

Isabel Clonvill and her son John (perhaps a priest), the latter of whom died in 1361. Both the effigies were 12 ins. in height. That of John Clonvill has long been lost, but that of his mother remains, though in a very worn and battered condition. It represents her in the garb of a widow. The inscription is now lost, but it remained in 1768, when Morant, the county historian, deciphered it as follows: *Isabele Clonvill e John son fils gisent ici, le quele Johaⁿ morust le xxiii. jour d'Octobr l'an de Grace m. ccc. lxi: Dieu de lour almes eit merci.* Though still in Norman-French, which was entirely



Brass of Richard and John Haddock and families, 1453, at Leigh.

discarded soon after in favour of Latin, this inscription gives, as will be seen, much more information than those given above, including the date of death.

At Leigh, near Southend, there is a fine brass, still perfect in all its parts, though rather battered, which well depicts the civilian costume of the middle of the fifteenth century. Its date is 1453, and it commemorates Richard Haddock, of Leigh, his two wives, Christina and Margaret (apparently represented by a single effigy), their seven sons and three daughters; also John Haddock, son of the above, with his wife, Alice, and their eight sons and three daughters.

The brass is unique (at least as far as Essex is concerned) in respect of the facts that it represents four principal effigies (a father and mother, with their son and daughter-in-law) all placed in a row, together with no fewer than twenty-one children (in two families), one of which unquestionably represents John Haddock, the son, who is thus represented by two effigies on one brass.

The two principal male effigies (both 1 ft. 4 ins. in height) are very closely similar. Both wear long fur-trimmed gowns, extending to the ankles, slit up a short way at the bottom in front, girt by a belt at the waist, and having loose sleeves gathered at the wrists. The shoes are long and pointed, and of one piece with the hose. The head is bare and the hair is cut in a manner which suggests the wearing of a wig.

The two principal female effigies (both 1 ft. 3 ins. in height) also very closely resemble one another. They wear long fur-trimmed gowns, falling in folds about the feet, slightly open at the neck, girt below the breasts, and having large loose sleeves, which fit tightly at the wrists. Both wear the "horned" head-dress usual at the period, consisting of a kerchief thrown over a wired erection, which was lowest in the middle. The children all wear costumes similar in general to those of their parents.

The Latin inscription below the chief figures may be thus translated:—"Here lie Richard Haddock and Christina and Margaret his wives; also John Haddock, son of the said Richard and Christina, and Alice, wife of the said John; which said Richard died the 11th day of November, in the year of our Lord, 1453; on whose souls may God have mercy." The supplication at the end has been intentionally obliterated, probably by a descendant in post-Reformation times, in order to save it from destruction by bigoted Puritans.

The Haddocks were closely associated with Leigh from the beginning of the fourteenth century till quite recent days. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the family contributed many distinguished members to the naval service of the country, including two admirals and several captains.

Of a priest in academic costume, of the end of the fifteenth century (probably about 1480), we have a good, though rather small, example at Strethall—one of our three Essex examples of this kind of figure, the other two being at Thaxted (name unknown, about 1450) and Barking (about 1480) respectively. The figure in question (which is 2 ft. 3½ ins. in height and in excellent condition)

is attired in hood (originally inlaid with white metal), tippet (the lower edge originally inlaid with white metal), and cassock. It is now quite impossible to say who the effigy was intended to represent, as the original inscription-plate is lost. A curious palimpsest inscription-plate (figured hereafter) which has recently been fixed below the effigy has nothing whatever to do with it, being of nearly a century later date.

Of widely different character is the large and still perfect brass, of the year 1508, at Little Braxted, which consists of effigies of



Brass of Priest in academic attire, about 1380, at Strethall.

William Roberts, Esq., his two wives (*Jocose, née Peryent*, and *Margaret, née Pyrton*), two sons and three daughters (in two families), with an inscription and four shields of arms. It is in good condition and a characteristic specimen of its kind, though executed in the debased and miserable style of the period to which it belongs, during which the art of engraving monumental brasses sunk very low.

The male effigy (1 ft. 7 ins. in height) is attired in the armour of what is known as the Early Tudor period, its chief characteristics being the short skirt of mail, over which hang pointed *tuilles*, and broad ugly *sabattons* upon the feet. A large lance-rest is affixed to the right breast of his cuirass. The head and hands are represented bare and the hair long, as usual at the period. The hilt of the sword is represented much too large in proportion to the blade and not in a straight line with it. The costume of the two wives (each represented 1 ft. 6 ins. in height) is identical, except in some small details, and consists of a long, low-necked, fur-trimmed gown, with tight sleeves turned

back at the wrists to form large cuffs, and confined at the waist by a loose girdle, the long ornamented end of which, after passing through a large buckle, hangs almost to the ground. Of this costume, we have on Essex brasses a very large number of examples. The children are in four groups, each wife having, grouped separately beneath her, her sons and daughters. The four *escutcheons* display, either separately or impaled, the arms of Roberts, Peryent, and Pyrton. The Latin inscription may be

thus translated :—" Pray for the souls of William Roberts, formerly one of the auditors of our lord King Henry the Seventh, and Jocose [or Joyce] his wife, who was daughter of Edward Peryent, Esq. ;



Brass of William, Joyce, and Margaret Roberts, 1508, at Little Braxted.

also Margaret, afterwards wife of the aforesaid William, who was daughter of William Pirton, Knight ; which same William Roberts died the eighth day of October Anno Domini 1508 ; on whose souls may God have mercy. Amen." The said William Roberts became

possessed of Little Braxted Hall in 1480, and it remained in the possession of his descendants until the end of the seventeenth century.

Of a palimpsest brass, we find an interesting example in the inscription-plate before alluded to, which has been recently fixed in error beneath a priest in academic costume, of nearly a century earlier date, at Strethall, as already mentioned. The Rev. William Cole, the Cambridge antiquary, gives, in his voluminous manuscripts, now in the British Museum, an account of its detachment from its original matrix in or about the year 1772.

Re Margaret Siday modo breuius clam
 quondam formosa mulierem religiosam
 hic contemplantur quales eritis memorantes
 pacifice posito deum esse donat. michi mandum

here lieth maister Thomas Abbott
 late pson her ishigh dressed p' buy day
 of octob the xviij of our lord m. cccc. cccc.
 xxxix on ishos soule Jhu haue mercy

Palimpsest inscription to Margaret Siday, about 1439,
 and to the Rev. Thomas Abbott, 1539, at Strethall.

On the side now hidden is a Latin inscription, which may be thus freely translated:—

I, Margaret Siday, now food for the worms,
 Was once a maiden comely and devout.
 Oh, ye who behold this, remembering what thou wilt be,
 Pray God to give unto me an abode in heaven.

It is not known who this Margaret Siday was. The inscription may have come from a distant parish. Judging from its tenour, it is not improbable that the effigy to which it originally belonged was that of a shrouded corpse, such memorials having been not uncommon at the period (the end of the fifteenth century) to which this inscription belongs.

The side of the plate now exposed bears an inscription (about half a century later in date than the foregoing) to the Rev. Thomas Abbot, who was appointed rector of the parish on February 8th, 1504-5, and died on October 8th, 1539.

On Some Interesting Essex Brasses. 19

The fine, large, and perfect brass of about the year 1595, at Latton, which commemorates Emanuell and Margaret Wollaye, affords



Brass of Emanuell and Margaret Wollaye, 1604, at Latton.

an excellent illustration of the costume worn by a gentleman and his wife at the close of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. There can be no doubt that actual portraits of the pair have been attempted.

The male figure (2 ft. 6½ ins. in height), which is bare-headed, wears a large neck-ruffle, a sleeved doublet buttoned down the front, and a long civilian's over-gown which reaches to the ankles, is turned back and broadly fur-trimmed round the neck and down the sides in front, and has long spirally-striped false sleeves fastened over the shoulders and hanging down over the arms on each side to the level of the knees.

The lady (whose effigy is one inch less in height) wears the French hood, a large neck-ruffle, and a sleeved under-gown, widely set off, crinoline-like, at the hips and handsomely embroidered down the front with a conventional flowing pattern of good design. Over all is a sleeveless outer gown, drawn together and tied by a sash at the waist, but otherwise left open to display the embroidery of the under-gown.



Brass of Hon. John Howard
(aged 12 days), 1600, at
Great Chesterford.

The central heraldic achievement displays the arms of Wolley. That over the lady's head displays those of Germin, to which family she belonged. That over the man's head displays the arms of Wolley and Germin impaled.

The inscription shows that the brass was probably laid down during the lives of both parties commemorated (probably about the year named above), blanks being left for the date of their deaths to be filled in as they occurred; but, as often happened, this intention was never carried out. Though there are in Essex several other instances in which *one* such blank has gone unfilled, we have no other in which there are *two* unfilled.

We have in Essex (for example, at Stanford Rivers and Aveley) several brasses specially laid down to commemorate "Chrysom Children"—that is, children which have died in infancy; but we have no brass of the kind of so late a date as that at Great Chesterford to the Hon. John Howard, who died on May 24th, 1600, aged twelve days. He was the seventh son of Thomas Lord Howard, first Earl of Suffolk, K.G., who took a prominent part in the fight against the Armada, was afterwards (1614) Lord High Treasurer of England, and died in 1626.

The figure (which is engraved on a rectangular plate 7½ inches in height) represents the child with its head resting on a large square

cushion, and wearing a quilted garment fitting closely round the neck, over which is wrapped a long shawl, fringed at the edge.

The last brass to be here noticed is of late date, having been laid down shortly before the time when the art of engraving monumental brasses entered its period of final decadence and decay. It is of the year 1634, and exists at Southminster. The plate upon which the figure is engraved has been slightly mutilated at the bottom in an attempt to tear it from its matrix. Upon it is represented, in a truly pictorial manner, a young cavalier dandy of the period of King Charles I., one John King, with his long hair falling in curls upon his shoulders, his sleeved doublet buttoned down the front (tied with a bow at the waist and with pointed lappets hanging down the front of each leg), his very loose knee-breeches, his large jack-boots with their tops turned down, his sword suspended at his left side by a sash which passes over his right shoulder, his outer cloak reaching to the level of his knees, and his large spurs. The arms on the two shields above his head are probably those of the families of King and Henbane, to the latter of which his wife belonged. He died, as the inscription states, on the 14th of July, 1634, aged 25 years.



Brass of John King, 1634, at Southminster.

In a future number, we hope to be able to present a further series of characteristic Essex brasses.

MILLER CHRISTY.
W. W. PORTEOUS.

The Kosi Peshitta.

THERE is, in Northern Persia, in the picturesque little mud-built village of Kosi, situated under the Kurdish hills beside the river Nazlu, in one corner of the lovely Urmi plain, a quaint old manuscript of the Syriac *peshitta* version of the New Testament with an interesting history.

The book is of vellum, somewhat coarse in quality, roughly bound in boards covered with well-worn leather, and wholly devoid

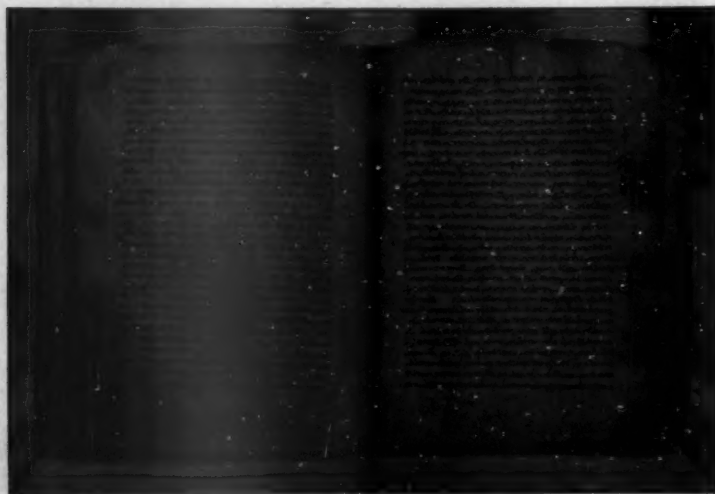


Fig. 1.—The Kosi Peshitta, or Syriac MS. of the New Testament.

of ornament. It measures, when closed, 10 ins. by 7 ins., and is 4 ins. in thickness. The writing, which is good and easy to read, as the above illustration shows, is in the ancient Syriac character known as *estrangili*.¹

It is not my purpose to give a critical account of the *peshitta*

¹ Greek, *στρογγύλη*.

New Testament. This may be found in any dictionary of the Bible or similar work. But it may be well to state briefly that it may be assumed to be a translation from the Greek made not later than the second century; though the form in which we now know it, as the authorised version of Syrians, western or Jacobite, and eastern or Nestorian, alike, since the fifth century has undergone considerable change by successive revisions. The main peculiarities of this version are, that it does not contain the 2nd Epistle of St. Peter, the 2nd and 3rd of St. John, the Epistle of St. Jude, nor the Revelation; it also omits the incident of the woman taken in adultery from St. John's Gospel, and has a few slight verbal differences from the accepted Greek text.

The Kosi manuscript, which the illustration shows open at the third chapter of St. John, appears to have been penned, according to a high critical authority, in the thirteenth century. It is, unfortunately, far from complete; the first nine chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel having fallen, and the whole of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which has been re-written on paper and bound into the volume. Several other pages here and there have similarly been re-written, about three hundred years ago. It cannot, therefore, be regarded as a good specimen, from the point of view of the lover of old books; nor as of any great antiquity from the standpoint of the textual critic.

But this does not prevent its being held in the highest esteem, and treated with a reverence which can hardly be defended, I think, from the charge of superstition, alike by the Christians, Nestorian and Armenian, and the Mussulmans, living in its vicinity.

It is kept in a room attached to an ordinary dwelling-house, in a box of the roughest description, made of unpainted wood, wrapped in numberless silk napkins profusely embroidered with tinsel, evidently of Russian origin, the gifts of pilgrims to the humble shrine. I was told that a devotee living in Erivan (Asiatic Russia) had offered to present a more worthy receptacle; but the sanctity of the volume appears to have become associated, in popular opinion, with the box which holds it, and Kosi was of one mind in objecting to any change. In the illustration it is shown exposed on the lid of this box, upon some of its silk veils. In a recess to the rear an oil lamp burns in its honour, as a type of the special presence and power of Almighty God. Near it, too, is a rude vessel containing charcoal and half-burnt grains of incense; and a few bunches of roses, dry and withered, fixed to pointed sticks, are stuck into the mud wall behind it. Owing to the great difficulty of taking a

photograph in the badly lighted room, these details will hardly be recognized in the reproduction.

When I asked the man who acted as my guide, a Nestorian Christian, what he believed to be its date, he replied that he could not say *exactly*, but assured me that it was written many years—perhaps a thousand—before the birth of our Lord! When I demurred to this statement he showed himself most unwilling to abandon it; but at length I succeeded in making it clear that facts



Fig. 2.—The Kosi Peshitta lying open upon its Box.

were against him, and he was induced to qualify his opinion, and to allow that perhaps it *might* be after Christ.

Both Mussulmans and Christians come in considerable numbers to make vows and particular petitions in its presence; and many are the cures attributed to reading over the sick a passage—generally the opening of St. John's Gospel—from this particular manuscript. The great purpose, however, for which it is used, is the judicial taking of oaths. It is commonly held that a certain movement of the leaves shows whether the oath is true or false; and it is universally most firmly believed that a false oath taken upon this sacred volume will inevitably bring evil consequences.

Rare, indeed, must be cases of false swearing; but there is an instance on record, to which all Kosi will testify. Some years ago a Syrian perjured himself, using the accustomed form, "May my son die if I am lying"; and the spot was pointed out to me, just outside the village, where immediately afterwards he received the news that his son, up to the moment of his taking the oath a strong, hale young man, had suddenly died.

The former custodian of the book was a Nestorian deacon; but since his death it has fallen to his widow to take care of it. She told me the following curious story, which appears to meet with general credence:—Several years ago the precious tome was most mysteriously stolen. That night her husband had a dream. He saw three heaps of manure fuel in a certain village, and a dog sitting on each, one black, one white, and the third spotted. He was told to go to this village, which proved to be Elbaq, across the Turkish frontier, and there he would find similar heaps, and, concealed in the one guarded by the spotted dog, would discover the missing manuscript. Accordingly the worthy deacon arose at dawn, and started on the journey, which must have taken three days at the least, probably four; and, needless to say, he found the lost treasure, and brought it back in triumph to its accustomed resting-place.

It may be of interest to a certain number of readers, if I put on record that this particular manuscript is what is known to students as Nestorian (in contra-distinction to Jacobite), and contains the well-known readings—"Church of *Christ*" (Acts xx. 28), and, in the re-written portion, "*apart from God*" (Heb. ii. 9).

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* For the photographs I am indebted to Mr. E. H. Heazell, of Urmi, Persia.

On the Discovery of a Roman Tessellated Floor near St. Nicholas' Church, Leicester.

IN the year 1832, whilst digging the foundations for some small houses, situated to the south-west of the Jewry Wall, in Leicester, a portion of an elaborate Roman pavement was discovered.

The cottages were completed, and their ground floor was placed about four feet above the pavement, which was thus buried in a shallow cellar. For many years the floor was seldom visited, as the way to it was both dark and dangerous. In 1882 it was suggested by someone that the Town Council should take up the floor and re-lay it in their Museum, but happily this was negatived. Better counsels prevailed, and at length the Town Council purchased the property, with the object of preserving the pavement *in situ*.

During the operations necessary to make it more accessible, it was found the floor was continued underneath the adjacent house. The owner was arranged with, and the site fully explored. When the work was completed, an apparently square floor of about 23 ft. was disclosed, together with its borders, and one piece of the original wall which was about 3 ft. high and still bearing a face of ornamented plaster work.

It is quite impossible to describe the beauties of the geometrical patterns of which the floor is made up, suffice it to say its workmanship and colour-design are perfect. The photograph will speak for itself.

Since this floor was brought to light so many years ago, no pavement of importance has been discovered in Leicester.

It was with considerable curiosity and interest that I heard of the recent "find" near to St. Nicholas' Church. I at once visited the site, and was immediately struck with the great resemblance to the floor found in 1832, and I believe that anyone who will

compare the photographs of these two floors will come to the conclusion that they are both the work of the same artist. This more recent discovery includes most of the patterns found on the older floor, but the centre piece has a unique design, having, well delineated, a peacock with spreading tail, in pattern almost identical with the modern examples so frequently met with in Derbyshire.

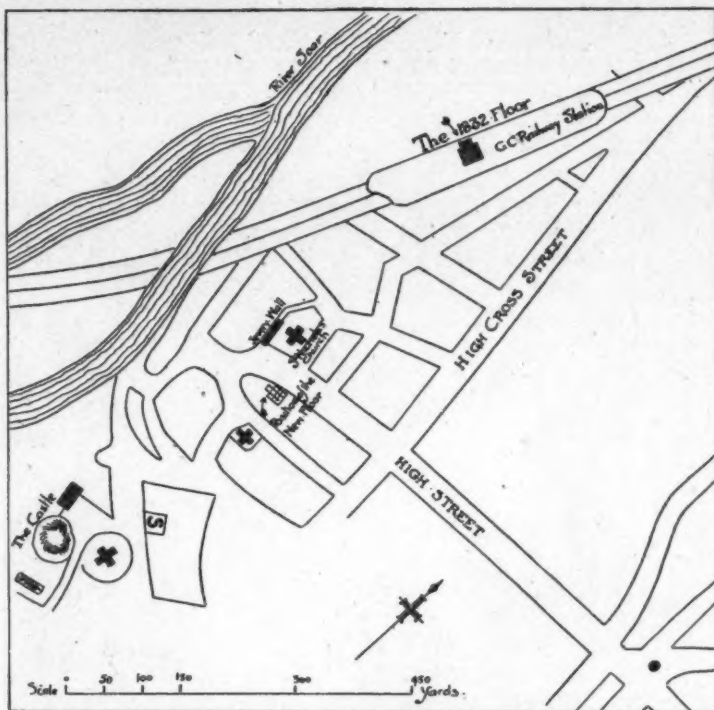


Fig. 1.—Part of the map of Leicester, showing position of Roman Pavements found in 1832 and 1898.

The following are a few rough notes that may be of general interest. Minute particulars have been difficult to get, as this floor is also being built over, and during the progress of the works, visitors are not much welcomed by the contractors. It is rather amusing to relate the number of claimants to the ownership of the pavement; it is said five distinct claims were made, *i.e.*, the Architect, Contractors, Owner of ground, the Corporation, and the

28 *Roman Tessellated Floor at Leicester.*

Crown. I am glad, however, to be able to state that it will remain where it was found, and it will be carefully built in with white glazed bricks, and made accessible for future generations.



Fig. 2.—Roman Tessellated Pavement found at Leicester in 1832.
Reproduced from drawing.

The floor appears to be a square of about 14 ft., and is divided into nine octagonal portions, the central one being occupied by the peacock. The borders are wide and are well shown in some

places, the design is very elaborate, and the same heart-shaped pattern occurs as in the borders of the 1832 floor. It is eight feet below the level of the present street, and about fifty yards from the south side of St. Nicholas' Church, and it would appear to make a right angle with the Roman masonry called "The Jewry Wall," from which it is also about fifty yards distant.

The pavement was covered up with a strange admixture of soil and building materials; large pieces of granite and slate were lying immediately upon the floor. From amongst this filling up, I have found the following:—Many coins, mostly Roman in a bad state of preservation, being principally copper, Roman roofing, tiles, and slates, coloured plaster, Salopian and Upchurch ware, typical specimens, such as mortaria and ampullæ, Samian ware, figured and plain, and also some coarse earthenware pots, and what appears to be a small mortarium made of Samian ware, of which latter more anon. Also amongst this *débris* I noticed many bones, some of which appeared to be human, charcoal, bones of the wild boar and horse, and others which I could not identify. In one part were immense quantities of the shells of the edible oyster. Such are the details that up to the present I have been able to collect, all too scanty from which to form any useful opinion, I am afraid.

It was claimed for the 1832 floor, that such a magnificent and costly floor could only have been found in the principal villa, and it was therefore argued that this must have been the site of the Prefect's house. But this new discovery, which is quite as beautiful and 400 yards away, would indicate that there were other villas equally worthy of being the house of the Prefect. Some writers have suggested the Temple of Janus, and tried to make the 1832 floor a part of that, but suppositions as to the position of this temple are plentiful, but they are far from conclusive. In my copy of Nichols' *Leicestershire* I find this statement: "A temple dedicated to Janus, I have no doubt, was built in St. Nicholas' churchyard, probably where the Church now stands." If that was so, this villa would have stood with its side towards the temple. At the present time some portions of several round columns of Roman age are standing in this same churchyard.

I throw out the suggestion for what it may be worth, that these floors represent some modified plan of the Roman dwelling of the upper classes, built to suit our northern climate. Both of the floors appear to be square, and they would well represent the dimensions of the hall or atrium, the Peristyle portion not having been built.

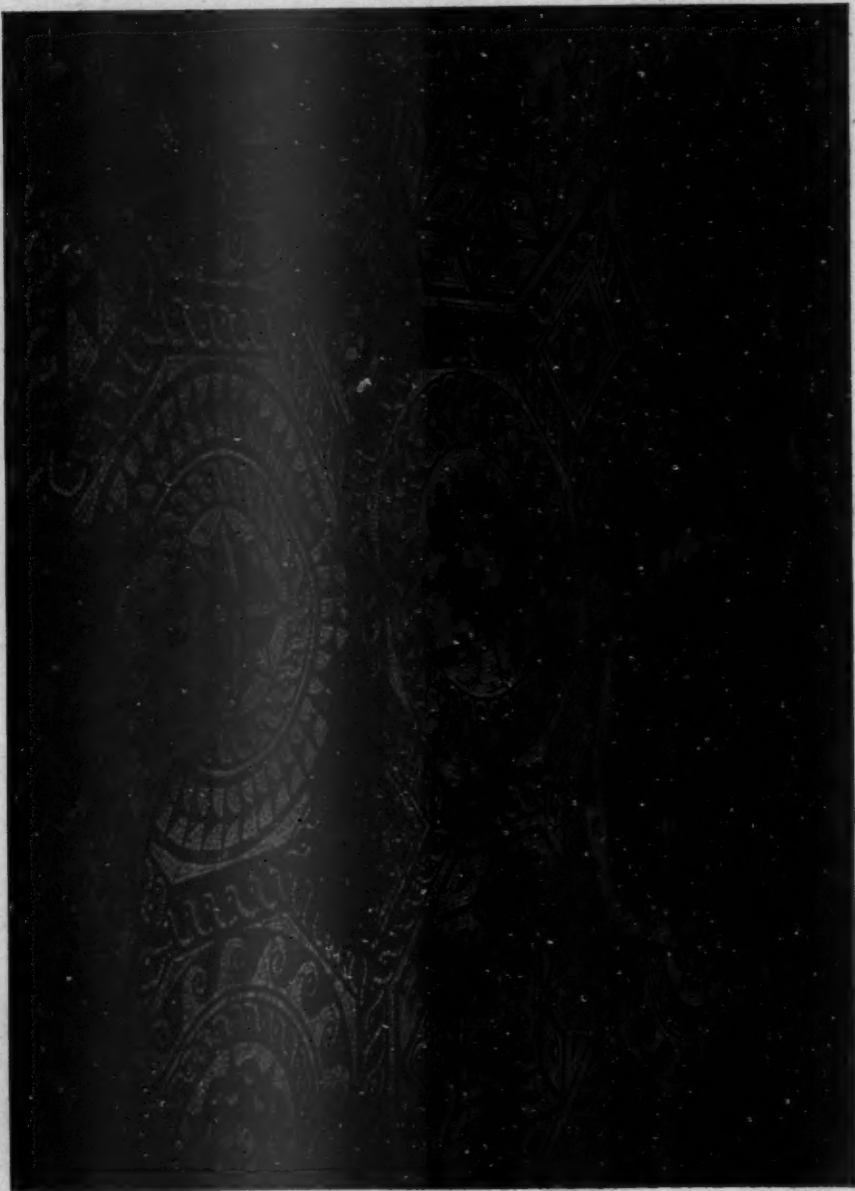


Fig. 3.—Roman Tessellated Pavement found at Leicester in 1898.
From a photograph by H. Pickering, Leicester.



Fig. 4.—Roman Tessellated Pavement found at Leicester in 1898.
From a photograph by H. Pickering, Leicester.

Up to now, I have not mentioned the fact that a plainer floor of about 10 ft. square was found in the position where one would expect the corridor to have been, but such is the case, and it has recently been found that the 1832 floor was provided with a similar corridor. So that we have an identical plan for both villas, but the corridor floor of the St. Nicholas' pavement is much better designed and preserved than the older one.

Upon the south side of the St. Nicholas' corridor, I noticed the ground was much reddened by fire, and it was near to this spot that most of the remains of their feasts were found. Unfortunately we have no authentic plan of the Roman domestic house, but I noticed in the Græko-Roman dwellings of Pompeii that the bakehouse is placed in a similar position near to the corridor in nearly every case.

Some of the coins were sent to the British Museum and were identified as here. Part of a silver denarius of Severus Alexander, A.D. 227-235; a copper denarius of Victorinus, A.D. 265-7; a penny of Henry III.; a Nuremburg token of the sixteenth century. A curious mixture of periods, but accounted for by disturbances of the ground since Roman times.

The Samian ware mortarium is very interesting, as the British Museum authorities inform me they have no such specimen, and they suggest the softness of the ware as being unsuitable to bear the friction that such vessels received. Nevertheless, it has all the indications of being a genuine mortarium, the inside has been sprinkled with the usual fragments of flint and other hard materials, and it bears now the marks where the pestal has operated.

Recently I have examined some hundreds of pieces of Samian ware in the Leicester Museum, and I have there found two small fragments labelled "Samian Mortaria," these, being parts of the rim, show a peculiar arrangement for pouring out the contents, having an embossed lion's head with an open mouth for the outlet. This seems peculiar to these vessels, as the yellow ware mortaria have flat lips upon the top of the rim over which the contents ran.

I had almost forgotten to mention that a stone-faced well about 60 ft. deep was found a few yards away from the tessellated floor. I am sorry to say it was filled up before I heard of it, and the contractors omitted to search it, which was a great mistake, as it would certainly have produced many objects of interest, and it was an oversight upon the part of someone.

I have to thank the contractors, Messrs. Geo. Brown & Son,

Roman Tessellated Floor at Leicester. 33

for their kindly assistance, and also Mr. H. Pickering, High Cross Street, Leicester, for his excellent photographs; the latter, by the way, will be glad to supply copies, 12 ins. by 10 ins. in size, to anyone who is interested in such discoveries.

W. TRUEMAN TUCKER, F.G.S.

*Parkside,
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4



The Changes and Chances of a Monastery.

ON the morning of Christmas Eve, 1143, a party of horsemen rode from Gloucester Castle to hunt deer in the Forest of Dene; and that day's sport ended the life-story of Milo Fitz Walter, Earl of Hereford, who headed the party, because fate, in the shape of an arrow, overtook him some twelve miles from home, nor was his absence discovered for several hours.

This same Milo seems to have been a godless man, who, at the time of his death, was excommunicated for seizing properties belonging to the See of Hereford. The robbery was a defiant act in answer to the bishop's threats, for Robert de Betun, who then wielded the pastoral staff at Hereford, withstood the earl's unlawful demands for money to support the troops he had raised in the Empress Matilda's cause.

Great were the dismay and the squabbling caused by Milo Fitz Walter's unlooked-for end, which some attributed to design, others to accident; and the truth will never be certainly known. The monks of St. Peter's, at Gloucester, claimed the body for burial, and those of Llanthony asserted their better right, the late earl having founded their priory. The end of it was that the Prior of Llanthony won the day, and the other claimant yielded, on condition that Milo's heir, with his wife "and all their heirs for ever, and the Lord of Gloucester Castle, whoever he might be, should, wherever they died, be buried within the walls of St. Peter's."

When Roger Fitz Walter had patched up his father's quarrel with Hereford, and set in some sort of order the confused threads of his private affairs, he bethought him of building a monument to Milo's memory on the spot where his body was found. This was a sheltered valley, hard by a stream, and the monument took the form of a Cistercian Abbey, dedicated "to the blessed Mary of Dene." But Roger's pious intentions seem to have been greater than his means, for the records say "there was a bishop of Hereford

who holpe much to the building of Flexeley," and, for lack of dates, it cannot be positively stated whether the bishop was Robert de Betun (who died 1148) or his successor, Gilbert Foliot. Certain however it is that between 1147 and 1154 the trees in Flaxley valley were cleared, fish ponds made, and a monastery built, in readiness to receive a few men in white garments who had foresworn the world with its temptations.

Tradition, in the person of Mackenzie Walcot, says the new abbey was colonized by Cistercians from Bordesley, in Worcester-shire, and this seems probable enough, because twice at later dates its abbot interfered in Flaxley affairs—firstly, in 1187, when his Flaxley brother was deposed and a Bordesley monk was set to rule in his stead; secondly, in 1335, when the Flaxley abbot was suspended for misconduct, the one from Bordesley was among the three commissioners appointed by the Crown to enquire into the case.

In those days the Forest of Dene formed an ecclesiastical district subject to Hereford, and this arrangement continued till the See of Gloucester was founded on the dissolution of the monasteries. The consequence was that Hereford was jealous of its rights, and the jealousy caused a good deal of friction with the favoured little abbey, which prospered exceedingly, owing to a variety of fortunate circumstances. The chief of these was that the building was conveniently situated for use as a hunting-box, and the kings who went thither were doubtless inclined by good sport, added to hospitality, to lend an ear to petitions.

The earliest charter on record after the founding of Roger Fitz Walter's memorial to his father was given by Henry II., while Duke of Normandy, and it was confirmed after he became king, in the following words:—

"Henry, by the grace of God King of England, and Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, and Earl of Anjou, to the Archbishops, &c., and to all faithful, as well English as Norman, both present and to come, greeting. Know ye that I have given and confirmed to God and the blessed Mary, and the monks of Dene, which I have received into my protection for the good of my soul, and of my ancestors in perpetual alms, a certain place within the Forest of Dene, to wit all the valley of Castiard and the place called Flaxley, where an abbey is founded of the Cistercian order in honour of the blessed Virgin Mary, for the love of God, and the benefit of the souls of my grandfather, King Henry, my father the Earl of Anjou, and the Empress Maud, my mother, all my parents

36 *The Changes and Chances of a Monastery.*

and ancestors. Also for the good of my own soul, and my heirs, and the prosperity and peace of the kingdom of England.

"I have also granted and confirmed all the donations which Roger, Earl of Hereford, gave to them in alms, all easements within my Forest of Dene, to wit common or pasture for their young cattle, hogs and other beasts, wood and timber to repair their houses, without committing waste in the Forest, tithes of chestnuts, one iron forge, free and quit, &c., &c. All these I give to God, the blessed Mary and my monks, devoutly serving God, to have and to hold for ever."

As may be readily believed, disputes soon arose when his majesty's back was turned, for the Norman game laws were terribly severe, and the keepers complained loudly that the White monks presumed upon their privileges, thereby encroaching on the duties of those who had the game in charge. Miners added to the chorus, and the movable forge was a special object of aversion, seeing that all who possessed such a thing, except the Flaxley monks, were charged seven shillings a year for license, which brought considerable revenue to the Crown. The abbot had, besides, a stationary forge in his valley, near the stream, where, as late as 1802, iron ore was smelted, after being brought from Lancashire for the purpose. Now the memory of it only lingers in local names, such as Furnace Yard and Mill Field, where flowers grow luxuriantly in their season.

Fortune continued to smile on the dwellers in the Vale of Castiard. They waxed greedy with the consciousness of their power to obtain what was asked for, disorders arose, rumours of evil government were noised abroad, and in 1187 a visitation was insisted upon by the Cistercian Chapter. The result of enquiry was that Abbot Waleran resigned, and Alan of Bordesley was made head of the house in his stead.

Richard I. continued the same line of conduct with regard to Flaxley as his predecessor. He granted a fresh charter for firewood, and another of protection, promising that the suits of the monastery should only be heard by him in person, or by his chief justice. It was natural enough that the monks eagerly seized the opportunity to secure their rights from each succeeding king, seeing that there were many to question them, while the lonely position of the abbey exposed it frequently to danger.

The place must have fallen on evil times, when John, the worst of the Plantagenet kings, took up the sceptre, though no mention is made of disaster. It is a matter of history that his majesty

persecuted Cistercians in 1210, and it cannot be supposed that the community at Flaxley escaped the misfortunes that befell their brethren. At the same time, John's love of sport may have softened his animosity in this particular case, and there are several allusions to his Flaxley visits, probably for hunting. In November, 1207, he was there, twice in 1212, and once in each of the next two years.

Richard, who lived *circa* 1200, is the only abbot, except Waleran, who is mentioned in the Cartulary, and ten documents seem to have been executed by him. Besides these, there were five bulls of privilege for Flaxley, two of which provided especially for immunity from tithes. Another, issued by Celestine III. in 1192, regulates the relations of the Abbey with the Bishop of Hereford, and is mainly intended to guard against undue Episcopal interference or exactions. Pope Innocent, in 1275, and again in 1282, renewed promises of protection, from which it may not unreasonably be supposed that these were much needed. After all, the very air of success breeds foes, and men, whose chief defence was their religious garb, found it necessary, as time went on, to guard themselves from the resentment of godless laymen by papal, as well as royal, promises of help.

Henry III., on coming to the throne in 1216, soon showed that he intended to continue his grandfather's favours to Flaxley, and there are frequent references to it in the Close Rolls of this reign. In the tenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and eighteenth years of it repeated orders were issued that the rights of pasturage, enjoyed in John's time, should still be allowed. In 1227, the monks were granted a right to fix "puches" in the Severn, and some years later another fishery in that river was given to them at Hineweir. This was afterwards confirmed by Edward III. on an annual acknowledgment of twelve pence.

In 1230, ten oaks were, by the king's command, to be given to the Flaxley abbot for the repairs of his house and church. He only succeeded, however, in getting less than half that number, and though, four years later, the constable of St. Briavel's was strictly enjoined not to hinder the brethren from having their timber, fresh complaints followed. The constable objected, no doubt with good cause, that the covetous Cistercians wanted more than their share, that they damaged the trees, and caused much harm by allowing their cattle to stray. The plaintiffs, on the other hand, clamoured that they had the royal promise, and the end of it was that a tract of woodland was granted to Flaxley instead of the aforementioned oaks—a tract known to this day as the Abbot's Woods.

38 *The Changes and Chances of a Monastery.*

Walter Map, the historian, happened, among other preferments, to hold Westbury-on-Severn in the early part of the thirteenth century, and he writes hotly against Church abuses, including his next door neighbours at Flaxley, who were constantly trying to encroach on his property. On one occasion he tells us that when the abbot was ill, Map called to enquire for him, and the sick man promptly tried to turn the visit to account for the good of the place, much to the caller's disgust.

When the historian in turn was sick, the abbot went to Westbury, and begged Map to repent of the evil he had spoken about the Cistercians, also to make his peace with God before it was too late, by leaving some of his possessions to Flaxley. It is needless to add that his reverence departed no richer than he came, and with the assurance that the Vicar of Westbury "would sooner be a lunatic than a monk."

Map was a friend of Giraldus, who likewise notices the covetousness of the Flaxley monks, and he tells with glee how they were snubbed for their pains, when they went whining to the king about the restoration of some land at the abbey.

Giraldus gives an amusing story of his majesty, who took refuge at Flaxley when benighted out hunting. That must have been before his person was known, for none recognised him, and, thinking the wanderer was some knight about Court, the monks challenged him to a drinking bout, which lasted till the small hours of the morning. Great was their dismay when the mistake was discovered next day, and great also was their relief when the good-natured monarch insisted that his hosts should drink with him in return before he left the place.

During the disturbances connected with Hubert de Burgh's rising in 1233-4, some of the rebels being worsted fled to Flaxley for refuge, and information soon reached the authorities, who went in search, setting a watch before the abbey. On March 6th the Constable of St. Briavel's, the Sheriffs of Gloucester, and others went to take the discomfited followers of the Earl Marshal, and apparently the abbot made the most of his opportunity by complaining to the king of damages. For, towards the end of the month, the constable was commanded to recompense the Cistercians, and give back all horses and arms, and to take nothing from the abbot's wood.

"The aforesaid constable and sheriffs," adds the entry, "are commanded not to permit the keepers to remain within the gates of the monastery, but to perform their custody outside the gates."

A curious light is thrown upon the private life of the community

at Flaxley by some of the papers in the Cartulary, which mention grants and gifts from dwellers in the country-side. For instance, Roger de Pulton gave the monks "for the soul of Earl William of Warwick, and for his own salvation, and that of his wife, five shillings of annual rent, especially assigned to purchase bedclothes for poor guests. Roger and his wife further gave themselves living and dead to the Church of Dene, and their bodies for burial, wherever they might die."

At an earlier date, one Roger de Bosco by name seems to have rented from the monks three acres of land, which his father had given them in alms. The monks also rented land of Roger, for which they paid sixpence a year, and the proprietor gave them back fivepence "for the salvation of himself and his family, and in consideration of a cow and calf." Thus the wily Cistercians secured their land for one penny!

After the long reign of Henry III. there are fewer references to the monastery in the heart of Dene Forest, which, after all, was an insignificant establishment compared with St. Peter's at Gloucester and many others. To the Abbot of St. Peter's his brother of Flaxley sent every year a haunch of venison, and the two houses apparently lived at peace, partly perhaps owing to the fact that twelve miles of bad country roads lay between them, and that the superiority of the larger house was unquestioned.

A mining quarrel is recorded as having taken place in 1287, when certain Abenhall miners dug without leave on the abbot's land and found a mine. Abenhall is a pretty hamlet adjoining Flaxley, whence an old Roman road runs to Littledean, skirting part of the forest known as Welshbury, and most of the local names have remained unchanged for seven hundred years, as proved by a charter of the reign of Richard I., in which they are mentioned.

The indignant dwellers at Flaxley sallied out, filled the hole with stones and earth, overwhelmed the trespassers with curses, and appealed, probably with their usual success, against the men who had dared to encroach on their neighbour's property.

In this reign the Abbot of Flaxley was five times summoned to Parliament, and Willis, it may be for this reason, has mentioned the place in his list of mitred abbeys. But the number of parliamentary abbots fluctuated till the time of Edward III., when it was finally fixed at twenty-six, of which St. Peter's was one, though little Flaxley cannot lay claim to the honour.

During the third Edward's reign the head of Flaxley was suspended for gross misconduct, charge of the monastery being

40 *The Changes and Chances of a Monastery.*

entrusted to the Abbots of Dore and Bordesley. Notice of the occurrence is made in the Patent Rolls of 1335, and there it is related that on account of the bad rule, as well as the negligence of the abbot, the household was deeply in debt. How long the suspension lasted is not known, and during the course of it people were forbidden to take anything from the manors, granges, or other possessions of the abbey without the commissioner's special permission.

Later in the same reign, Flaxley must have been restored to the sunshine of Royal favour, for in 1352 a special grant was made of £36 9s. 1d., "in consideration of losses from deer, and other wild beasts of the Forest, and also from the various and constant visits of the King."

The palmy days of the Cistercians in the Vale of Castiard were drawing to an end. Wycliffe's influence swelled the outcry against Church abuses, printing and the new learning brought many things to light, and finally, in the reign of the despotic Tudor king, the doom of the Monasteries was sealed.

In 1522, Sir William Kingston, Constable of the Tower of London, was given St. Briavel's, a strong castle on the Welsh border, beyond Dene Forest, which has more than once been alluded to in this paper. No doubt that gentleman cast covetous eyes on the Monastery, which, with its many surrounding possessions, in the shape of fat farms or fisheries, lay within easy distance of his new country home. It is also within the bounds of probability, that, when divisions of the spoil was in view, Sir William may have suggested this very thing to his master. At all events, it is a fact that Flaxley, the first monastery in Gloucestershire to fall, was made over to the knight in 1536.

In each of the two previous years additions had been made to the monks' property, and, bitter to the spirit of Thomas Were, the Abbot, who executed both deeds, must have been the news that everything was to pass into the hands of his neighbour at St. Briavel's. Doubly bitter, because, from all accounts, the neighbour feared neither God nor man; and rumour says that his first act on coming to Flaxley was to pull down the church for the better stabling of his horses.

The Abbot retired, broken-hearted, to Rowant-on-Thame, where it may have been some consolation that he lived to see the death of Sir William Kingston, in 1540, and the downfall of the arch-enemy, Cromwell, the following year.

At the Dissolution, Flaxley was valued, according to Dugdale,

at £112 3s. 1d., and it continued in the Kingston family till 1647, when it was sold to some Dutch linen merchants, two brothers, who had settled in London, and thought it would be a fine thing to own a country estate. Children's voices and pattering footsteps took the place of monks' orisons, and later several nonjuring clergy found a welcome, as well as a refuge, in the old place. As years rolled on, occasional fires, or the freaks of successive inmates, destroyed much of the monastic buildings, and gradually little remained except traditions, memories, or facts fossilized by written records. It is fortunate that this is so, for in the public offices can be seen dusty parchments, containing what is virtually the story of Flaxley Abbey, and of recent years the Cartulary has come to light, containing ninety-seven documents, which are of interest to all who love to trace history through these curious relics.

One wing of the Abbey has withstood the changes and chances of time, and in 1788 the site and floor of the chapter-house were discovered in the garden. At the upper end was a circular stone bench, and in the vault beneath were found several stone coffins with carved lids. The base of a pillar may still be seen among the ruins of the chapter-house, and it is the same in design as those at Tintern, where total destruction overtook the Cistercians' dwelling, leaving only the church walls, with their exquisitely traceried windows.

Thus the present tells mutely of the past, and among the crowd of sightseers who go every summer to gaze on the ruins of Tintern, in the Wye Valley, there are comparatively few who know that the same fate overtook another Cistercian monastery in the Forest, not many miles away—a once prosperous Abbey dedicated "To the blessed Mary of Dene."

S. M. CRAWLEY BOEVEY.

The Symbolism of some Cornish Bench-ends.

THE iconoclastic zeal of the Protestant Reformers, the brutal ignorance of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and uncompromising restorations by the architect of the present day have destroyed so much of the beautiful symbolic decorations of our ecclesiastical buildings that the bare, gaunt appearance of their interiors conveys but a feeble idea of what they were once like, when resplendent with all the glories of stained-glass windows, encaustic tile pavements, painted ceilings, walls decorated in distemper, sculptured capitals, and carved woodwork. For some inscrutable reason, although Mr. Kensit



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.

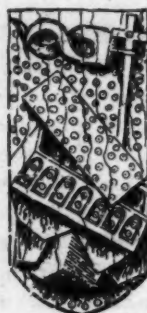


Fig. 3.

Carved Shields from Bench ends at Launcells, Cornwall.

and his supporters would no doubt be highly scandalised at the sight of an image graven in stone or wood, or the figure of a saint painted on a wall, symbolism in stained glass does not appear to shock their tender susceptibilities, perhaps because saints on windows can be so easily seen through. How grotesque some of the symbolism of the nineteenth century may be, can be gathered from the fact that there is a church not a hundred miles from London where St. James the Greater is represented on one of the windows as a man of gigantic stature and St. James the Less as a dwarf! However, we may be thankful that in some of the remoter districts of

England (if we may so far presume to call Cornwall remote without offending "one and all") there are still to be seen examples of ecclesiastical art which have hitherto escaped all destructive agencies and still remain to give us an insight into the religious ideas of the Middle Ages embodied in stone and wood. The number of carved oak bench-ends of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries¹ to be found in Cornwall is exceptionally large and the devices upon



Fig. 4.



Fig. 5.



Fig. 6.



Fig. 7.



Fig. 8.



Fig. 9.

Carvings on Bench-Ends at Launcells.

them are of unusual interest. Some of these have been already described and illustrated in the *Reliquary* by Mr. A. G. Langdon, F.S.A., and we are again indebted to him for the examples now figured.

The first group from Launcells (figs. 1, 2, and 3) are especially valuable, as showing how a Scriptural subject may in the first instance be treated

¹ The bench-ends at Lewannick (now destroyed) were dated 1546 and those at Altonon are dated 1500.

realistically, then be conventionalised by stereotyping certain details, and lastly, being converted into a sort of hieroglyphic symbol by omitting everything except the most essential features. It has been stated, with how much truth we cannot say, that Phil May produces his wonderfully graphic sketches by making an elaborate drawing to begin with, and afterwards erasing every line which does not tell. The Launcells bench-ends seem to have been designed much on the same principle. The subjects are taken from the Passion of Our Lord, and are treated as follows:—

FIG. 1.—*The Harrowing of Hell*.—The triumphant expedition of Christ after His Crucifixion, when he brought away the souls of the righteous who had died and been held captive in Hell since the beginning of the world. The Harrowing (*i.e.*, spoiling or robbing) of Hell is a subject founded partly on certain passages in Scripture and partly on the more detailed account given in the Apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus (chaps. xiii. to xx.). In Byzantine art of the eleventh and twelfth centuries¹ Christ is shown standing at the entrance to Hell (conventionally treated as the open mouth of a monster), with the Cross of the Resurrection in one hand, and leading Adam by the other. Our Lord is represented as trampling the Devil and the gates of Hell, with the locks broken open, beneath His feet. All the Saints of God are seen following behind Adam in a procession upwards out of Hell.

On the bench-end at Launcells the whole scene is cut down to a hieroglyph consisting of the Cross of the Resurrection and the open mouth of Hell.

FIG. 2.—*The Three Maries at the Sepulchre*.—This subject is reduced to the empty tomb, with "the linen clothes laid by themselves" (Luke xxiv. 12) which were seen by St. Peter, and above, the three boxes containing the sweet spices prepared by the Myrrhophores to anoint the Saviour.

FIG. 3.—*The Resurrection*.—Here the idea of the whole scene is conveyed by the empty tomb and the Cross of the Resurrection, with its banner waving in the breeze.

FIG. 4.—*Mary Magdalene mistakes Christ for the Gardener*.—The garden is indicated by a tree with a paling behind it; the presence of the gardener by a spade; and Mary Magdalene by her spice-box.

FIG. 5.—*The Supper at Emmaus*.—The whole scene suggested by a three-legged table, with a jug and platter and fragments of bread (?) upon it.

FIG. 6.—*The Doubt of Thomas*.—Shown by the Cross of the Resurrection, symbolising Christ risen, and a hand feeling the wound on the heart.

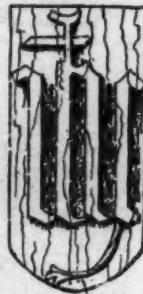


Fig. 10.—Carving on Bench-end at Launcells.

¹ As in the Psalters, Tiberius C. vi. and Nero C. iv. in the British Museum, and on the wall painting in Chaldon Church, Surrey.

Fig 7.—*The Ascension*. A mountain top with the impress of a pair of feet and the lower part of the body of the Saviour disappearing upwards into the clouds.

Fig 8.—*The Agnus Dei*. Christ triumphant symbolised by the Lamb, with the Cross of the Resurrection, resting upon the open book (Revelations v. and vi.).

The remaining two carvings from Launcells shown on figs. 9 and 10 have upon them the Fleur de Lys of the Blessed Virgin and the *ihc* abbreviation of the name of Christ.

The device on the shield represented on fig. 11 on a bench-end in Kilkhampton Church, Cornwall, probably belongs to the class of trade

symbols, of which other examples have been given in previous numbers of the *Reliquary*. The spade and basket are no doubt intended to indicate that the person who presented the bench-end was a gardener or a farmer.

The one-sided spade was in common use in England in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, as Adam is invariably represented in the early MSS. and in Norman sculpture tilling the ground with an implement of this shape. The one-sided spade still survives in Ireland, Shetland, and Skye, having not yet become obsolete because it is so handy for planting potatoes. The basket is also of a form which has perhaps come down to us

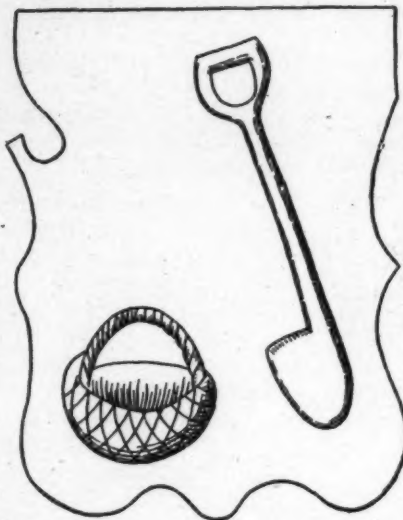


Fig. 11.—Carving on Bench-end at Kilkhampton.

from the ancient Britons.¹ Early representations of baskets of this type occur on Norman sculptures at Castor Church, Northamptonshire, and at Vezelay² in France. Such baskets are known in Cornwall as *hobbins* and are used chiefly for planting and taking up potatoes, or for removing loose stones from the surface of the fields.

¹ The word "basket" is of Celtic origin, being derived from *basg*, plaiting. Martial (b. A.D. 40) says "Barbara de pictis veni bascula Britannis, sed me jam mavult dicere Roma suam."

² Illustrated in the *Builder* for December 20th, 1884.

Notes on Archæology and Kindred Subjects.

MEDALLION PORTRAIT IN BRONZE OF THE LATE SIR A. WOLLASTON FRANKS, K.C.B., &c.



Medallion Portrait in Bronze of the Late Sir A.
Wollaston Franks, K.C.B., &c.

ENQUIRIES have frequently been made by friends of the late Sir A. W. Franks, who have seen the life-size portrait medallion executed by Mr. C. J. Praetorius for the Society of Antiquaries, whether it was proposed to produce copies on a reduced scale. As the Society does not intend to make any such copies, Mr. Praetorius has executed a small panel Portrait (5 ins. by 5½ ins.) differing from that executed by the Society. A copy of this portrait can (by the kind permission of the Viscount Dillon, President of the Society of Antiquaries) be

seen in the Library of the Society. Mr. Praetorius proposes to limit the number of these bronzes to fifty, when the mould will be destroyed. The price, framed, is £2 2s.

SPINNING IN PERSIA.

WE are indebted to Mr. E. Holtzer for permission to reproduce the photograph here given of spinning in Persia. The European methods of spinning have been recently described and illustrated in the *Reliquary*, and it is interesting to compare these with the Eastern methods. The chief difference is that the spinner in the East squats on the floor when at work instead of standing or sitting, as is usual in Europe. The frame of the

Persian spinning-wheel is constructed of turned wood, but otherwise it resembles the apparatus used throughout India and China. The Persians are expert wood turners, and do all their work sitting on the floor, with a



Spinning in Persia.
(From a photograph by E. Hulten.)

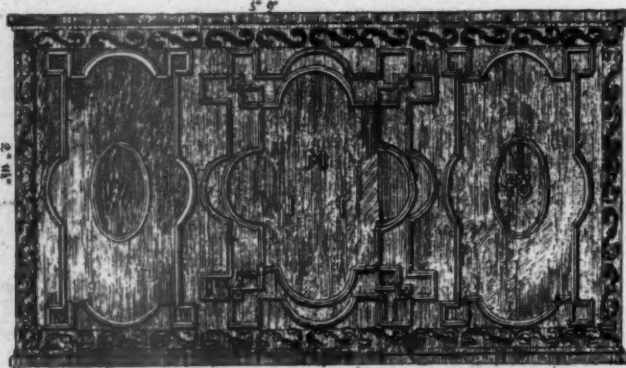
very primitive lathe worked by a bow. It is astonishing to a European to see wooden pipe-stems, as long as 1 ft. 6 ins., turned and bored with such

simple mechanical appliances. The Persian houses of the poorer kind are built of mud. They invariably have recesses in the inside walls, and sometimes a shelf above on which objects are placed instead of on a table. The doors are made in two leaves opening outwards, and have a panel across the bottom of the doorway to keep draughts off the floor, a most break-neck contrivance for those who are not accustomed to it.

LEADWORK IN NORTHUMBERLAND ALLEY.

I AM indebted to the kindness of Mr. A. B. Ebbs, of the firm of Messrs. Smith & Ebbs, for permission to make the accompanying sketch of a piece of leadwork at present lodged in the firm's offices in Northumberland Alley, Fenchurch Street.

Perhaps the finest feature in the design is the central portion, which is of an unusual character, consisting really of a panel within a panel, and bearing the initials "M I I."



LEADEN FRONTAGE
NORTHUMBERLAND ALLEY.

The right and left hand panels are of similar form to the leadwork in the Colonial Bank, illustrated in the *Reliquary* for April last.

From the length and breadth of the leadwork now illustrated, it will be seen at once that the work of casting was no light labour, and whoever the makers were they had arrived at a considerable state of efficiency in moulding and casting.

The frontage was removed to its present position when the offices of the firm were transferred from Postern Row, Tower Hill.

It is in excellent preservation, and is securely fixed out of harm's way, on a wall in the basement of the building.

J. RUSSELL LARKBY.

PRE-NORMAN CROSS-SHAFT AT CAMBUSNETHAN,
LANARKSHIRE.

WE are indebted to Mr. Alexander Napier, of Wishaw, for the illustration and description of the fragment of a pre-Norman cross-shaft recently found by him in the old church-yard at Cambusnethan, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles north-east of Wishaw Railway Station, Lanarkshire, N.B. At the bottom of the stone is a tenon 7 ins. deep for insertion into the mortice of the base, and the portion of the shaft of the cross above the tenon is 2 ft. 3 ins. high by 1 ft. $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins. wide at the top, and 1 ft. $4\frac{1}{2}$ ins. wide at the bottom by $6\frac{1}{2}$ ins. thick. It is sculptured on three faces thus :—

Front.—At the top, a four-cord plait with the cords double-beaded; in the middle, a key-pattern of the Swastika type, also double-beaded; and at the bottom a group of four figures, one smaller than the others passing beneath the arms of the two figures on the right.

Back.—At the top, two pieces of four-cord plait with double-beaded cords; in the middle, a key-pattern of similar design to that on the front; and at the bottom, either a serpent or a bit of interlaced work, partly broken away.

Left side.—A narrow band of key-pattern of Z type.

The Cambusnethan cross-shaft belongs to the Strathclyde group of the early Christian monuments of Scotland, and the ornament upon it has more in common with the Welsh crosses than with the Pictish monuments of the north-east of Scotland. Key-patterns founded on the Swastika (*i.e.*, having four legs, arranged as on the arms of the Isle of Man) are not, as far as I am aware, to be found in the early Irish illuminated MSS., and they occur almost exclusively on the crosses of Strathclyde¹ and of South Wales.² It is worth considering whether these points of similarity between the ornament of the crosses of South Wales and Strathclyde indicate that the monuments on which the Swastika key-patterns occur belong to the period when the country from Cardiff to Glasgow was still Welsh, or not. It is to be feared that so early a date is inadmissible. Another way of accounting for the presence of this peculiar kind of key-pattern in parts



Pre-Norman Cross-shaft at Cambusnethan, near Wishaw, Lanarkshire, N.B.

¹ As at Barrochan.

² As at Margam and Merthyr Mawr, Glamorganshire; Golden Grove, Carmarthenshire; and Nevern, Pembrokeshire.

of Great Britain so remote from each other is by Scandinavian influence. The three-legged Swastika, or Triskele, is found in the Bronze Age in Sweden and Denmark, and the four-legged variety, or Tetraskelle, on bracteates of the Iron Age. Patterns suggested by the Swastika are much more characteristic of Scandinavian than of Celtic art; so that on the whole we are inclined to place the Cambusnethan stone in the period after, rather than before, the Danish invasions of the ninth and tenth centuries.

The double-heading of the raised bands of the key-pattern on the Cambusnethan stone is a somewhat unusual feature, although there is another instance at St. Andrew's (N.B.).

The meaning of the figure subject on the Cambusnethan is very obscure. Mr. R. C. Graham, F.S.A., has suggested that it may be intended for the Three Children in the Fiery Furnace.

THE PORTRAITURE OF ENGLISH COINS.

"Was he really anything like that, I wonder!" remarked a lady friend, on looking over my coin collection the other day. The piece referred to was a penny of one of the first three Edwards in an excellent state of preservation, and which, of course, exhibited the usual conventional head which the king's coiners were content to place on the coin of the realm. That is just the absurdity; he was nothing like the effigy placed on his coins, otherwise numismatists would be deprived of their favourite bone of contention—the correct mode of assigning the coins of the first three Edwards to their respective issuers.

It is, indeed, a matter for regret that our forefathers did not apply themselves to a correct rendering of the king's portrait on the currency of the country, and so preserve for their descendants a complete and interesting gallery of contemporary portraits, as in the case of the coins of Rome, where every detail of expression and form is faithfully and impartially rendered.

Now, why was this not done in the case of the English series? One or two reasons may be suggested:—

- 1.—Inability of Early English artists to produce a portrait.
- 2.—Lack of the requisite tools to produce a likeness.
- 3.—A desire to adhere to precedent.

The first suggestion may perhaps be set aside on the following grounds:—The Great Charter of Kelso, A.D. 1150, granted by Malcolm IV. to the abbey of that name, runs—"Malcolmus dei gra," etc. The greatest interest attaches to the initial letter "M," in which are represented the likeness of King David and his grandson Malcolm, then in his nineteenth year, not only on account of the artistic skill displayed, but also on account of the evident portraits of David and his grandson.

Now, if it were possible to an artist to draw on paper a really spirited portrait, would it not be equally possible for him to engrave a die from which a coin might be struck bearing at least a remote portrait of its issuer?

Suggestion number two may also be set aside as untenable. A nation and period capable of producing elegant and intricate designs of inlaid metal work could surely amongst its numbers find some persons capable of executing a portrait, rude though it might be, of so eminent and exalted a person as a king.

The last suggestion is probably the key to the whole matter. A precedent had been created by former die-sinkers, whose lead was contentedly followed by their descendants, with the result that a stiff and painfully unnatural effigy was produced, which could not be called a portrait, and, indeed, was not intended for such.

Before proceeding further, we will endeavour to ascertain who created the precedent for a conventional effigy on the obverse of our coinage.



Fig. 1.—William I. Penny, showing the earlier style of conventional head.



Fig. 2.—Edward I. Penny. A later style of conventional head.



Fig. 3.—Henry V. London Groat. Still greater care is shown in this case.

The prototype of the English coinage is usually supposed to be the gold stater of Philip II. of Macedon, which in itself is no mean example of the die-sinking art. As the traders of ancient Greece carried on an extensive tin trade with the primitive inhabitants of Britain some one hundred and fifty years B.C., it is only natural that Greek coins should reach these shores, where they were copied as nearly as possible by the inhabitants; but as each native die-sinker enlarged on the errors of the first copyist, it came about that the resemblance between the Greek stater of Philip and the British copy was entirely lost. The reverse design of the former—namely, a two-horsed chariot to right—being replaced by a meaningless series of dots and dashes, which perhaps suggested to later generations the really elegant reverse designs of future coinages. The head of the original stater was entirely lost, and does not appear again until the time of Offa,¹ and then only in a weak and rough form, and it was not until the reign of Baldred² that the head became general as an obverse, at

¹ King of Mercia, 757-796.

² King of Kent, 805-823.

each appearance becoming more and more conventional. From this time onward the head is shown in profile, and continued so until the Conquest, when the head of William I. is sometimes given full-faced. It was the British die-sinker then who created the precedent for a conventional head, which reigned supreme until Henry VII. assumed the power of kingship. During his reign we again see the head in profile, but this time it has the appearance of a portrait, though stiff in execution and strained in effect.



Fig. 4.—Henry VIII.
Half-Groat, showing
the profile portrait.

During the reign of Henry VIII., however, we are treading on firmer ground, the king's advancing age being clearly apparent by the difference in the type of face, the early coinage representing him in full activity of youth, and the last coinage portraying him as the bluff King Hal, with neatly trimmed beard.

The art of portrait engraving continued to improve during the respective reigns of Edward VI. and Mary, but received a decided check during the reign of Elizabeth. That this retrograde movement was noted at the time may be judged from the fact that in 1563 a proclamation was issued to the effect that "a special coning painter" should be appointed to execute a portrait of Her Majesty, from which the die-sinker might copy the "Natural grace, and favour, of Her Majesty's expression." Possibly there was something in the Queen's expression difficult to produce, as certainly no improvement in portraiture is to be seen on her coins; on the other hand, however, the die-sinker may have had more respect for his position than for the truth, for had he reproduced the wrinkles of advancing age on the Queen's face his office would perhaps have been filled by one who chose to depict her in the flower of youth!

A slight advance was made in portraiture during the reign of James I., whose coins exhibit the bulging forehead and capacious mouth of that monarch which caused such merriment to the gallants at St. James'. Further advance continued during the reign of Charles I., and the culminating point was reached by Simon in his Charles II. Petition Crown, which has never been improved upon, even to the present time. As is well-known, however, this famous work was rejected in favour of the work of a Dutch artist.

The portraits of James II., William and Mary, George I., II., and the earlier issues of George III., may be described as "fair to good," but the last issue of George III. exhibits a bold, though brutal, head by Pistrucci. The portraits of George IV., William IV., and the first issue of the present reign are excellent. Would that the portrait of Her Majesty



Fig. 5.—Elizabeth
Sixpence.

had been left as Wyon engraved it for the first issue, but the Government, with a laudable desire to celebrate the famous 1887, let itself loose on a representation of the Queen which is nothing if not ludicrous. The less said on the present issue the better. As a portrait of ten years back it is fair, but to call it a present day likeness is to libel the whole of our British portrait painters.

J. RUSSELL LARKBY.

TOMBSTONE AT HOLGATE.

THE illustration here given of a tombstone in Holgate Churchyard, is reproduced from a rubbing taken on the occasion of the visit of the Cambrian Archæological Association, this year, during the Ludlow meeting.



Eighteenth Century Tombstone in Holgate Churchyard, Shropshire.

It is interesting, as an example of the quaint lettering and symbolism often found on sepulchral monuments of the last century in remote parts of the country. The inscription is as follows:

. Go ye cursed
 into Hell
 Powel
 Mourn not for me Husband & Children dear
 I am not dead but sleeping here
 The debt is paid my grave you see
 Pour on the glass that runs for thee

| | |
|---|---|
| As thou art now So once was I Remember man That thou must dy | Man goeth to his long home and the mourners go a- bout the streets Eccles. xii. v. 1706 |
|---|---|

THE ROMAN CORN MILL.

THE excavations at Silchester, in 1897, revealed, amongst other things, a house of the corridor type, in Insula xviii., near the south gate of the Romano-British city, attached to which was an enclosure containing six circular rubble bases. Mr. G. E. Fox, F.S.A., has suggested that these may have been the supports for stone querns, and that the building was a flour-mill. We give for comparison an illustration of one of the bakeries of Pompeii, showing a set of four corn mills, *in situ*, on similar rubble bases to those found at Silchester. The lower mill-stone is cylindrical below and conical above, the sides of the cone being slightly concave. The upper mill-stone is shaped like a dice-box on the outside, and like an hour-glass on the inside; its lower half fits on the top of the stone below, whilst its upper half acts as a hopper to receive the corn. The upper stone turns an iron pivot fixed in the centre of the lower stone, and working in a socket in the constricted part of the upper stone. The socket has four vertical holes round its circumference, to allow the grains of corn to fall from the hopper between the grinding surfaces. The ground flour was probably received in an annular wooden trough on the step on the top of the rubble base.

The motive power for turning the upper mill-stone was derived from either slaves or donkeys, who worked two capstan bars fixed in the square sockets shown in the illustration. The floor round the mills is roughly paved with stone, to stand the wear and tear of the asses' feet. The mills are made of grey volcanic stone, containing large crystals of leucite, and are about six feet high. There does not seem to have been any contrivance in the Roman mill for adjusting the distance between the upper and lower stones, so as to grind the flour coarsely or finely.

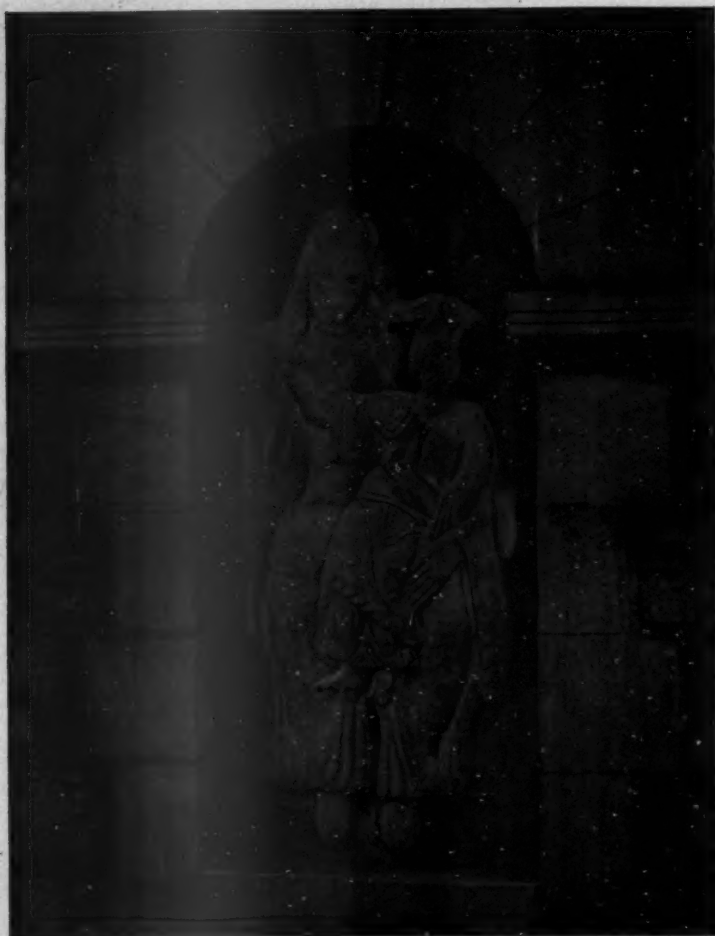


Bakery and Corn Mills at Pompeii.

1224.

NORMAN SCULPTURE AT LANGRIDGE.

We are indebted to the kindness of Dr. George Norman, of Bath, for kind permission to reproduce the photograph taken by him of the sculpture of



Sculpture of the Virgin and Child in Langridge Church, Somersetshire.

(From a photograph by Dr. George Norman.)

the Virgin and Child in Langridge Church, four miles north of Bath, on the borders of Somersetshire and Gloucestershire. The sculpture is probably of Norman date, but the treatment of the drapery is not unlike that

found in the Saxon MSS. The heads of the figures have been mutilated, possibly by the theological hammer of some village Kentsit at the time of the Reformation.

Notices of New Publications.

"SUTTON VALENCE AND EAST SUTTON," by the (late) Rev. J. CAVE BROWNE, M.A. (Dickinson, High Street, Maidstone, 1898). This little volume, the final work of an able and well-known archæologist, was written with the purpose of assisting the fund for the restoration of the interesting Kentish church of East Sutton. It gives in pleasing fashion a popular account of the devolution of the manor, and of the history and architecture of the church. The chief feature of the edifice is a northern chapel, which contains two beautiful windows, one of Decorated character, the other somewhat later in date. These are illustrated by reproductions of photographs, as is also a fine font of early thirteenth century work. The church also contains the well-known brass of Sir Edward Filmer, dame Elizabeth his wife, and their eighteen children.

"LIFE IN AN OLD ENGLISH TOWN" (Social England Series.), by MARY DORMER HARRIS (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co.). The old English town which the authoress has chosen as the subject of her excellent little work is Coventry, and it may be admitted that if the very general title of the book can be regarded as sufficiently covered by the history of one old English town, Coventry is probably as good a choice from which to illustrate the course of life in most of our ancient municipalities as it is possible to make. The town does not bulk largely in the annals of the kingdom, its most prominent part having been played during the dynastic struggles of the Lancaster and York factions, when it espoused the cause of the former party. The author therefore wisely, and indeed necessarily, relies upon the interest and importance of the municipal life of the town, the general features of which were no doubt reproduced in most of the second rank towns of the Kingdom. The foundation of a large monastic house; the rise of a small town by the settlement of a body of workers in some branch of industry; the constantly recurring quarrels between the men of the town, the men of the church, and the lord of the fee; the hardly-won struggles for freedom, broadening from precedent to precedent; all these are well-recognised incidents in the rise, development, and, alas, that it should have to be said, decline of many of our mediæval towns. Coventry seems to have had no history worth mentioning from, let us say, the year 1600 to the industrial period that opened with the present century, and in this respect also it is a type of many old English towns whose

archives prove them to have been full of vigour several centuries ago. In small books like the present volume it is a mistake to reproduce fac-similes of early charters; they convey no idea of the original, and are *caviare* to the readers catered for by cheap series.

"ANNALS OF EALING," by EDITH JACKSON (London: Phillimore & Co.). This is a pleasantly written and well produced book. From the severely scientific point of view it can hardly be regarded as a history of the parish of Ealing. It really does no more than set before the general reader an interesting account of the chief features of the present suburb, which it connects with the past by a few references from parochial documents and quotations from earlier writers. The former are, however, so scanty as to belie the statement made upon the title page of the work. It is also decidedly disappointing to be told no more about the church than that when in 1866 the present edifice was altered it was found to have been erected upon a solid substructure, composed entirely of the *débris* of the former church, and the material thus brought to light showed that this earlier church, judging from the solid blocks of stone, fragments of mouldings, and other ornamental work dug up, had been apparently a handsome stone building. The late Archbishop Tait referred to the result of that restoration as "the conversion of a Georgian monstrosity into a Constantinopolitan basilica." Ealing school, under the mastership of Dr. Nicholas, turned out a greater number of boys who became distinguished than probably any other seminary in the kingdom—Charles Knight, Lord Lawrence, his brother Sir Henry Lawrence, Sir Robert Sale, his brother George Sale, Sir Henry Rawlinson, his brother Canon Rawlinson, Bishop Selwyn, Sir George Macfarren, Thackeray, John Henry Newman, and his brother Francis W. Newman. T. H. Huxley and his brothers—Huxley's father and Macfarren's, also, were masters in the school—Capt. Marryat, Lord Truro, Lord Chief Justice Thesiger, Sir Richard Westmacott, Hicks Pasha, and W. S. Gilbert. Ealing is rightly proud of its scholastic associations. The volume is beautifully illustrated.

"THE HIGH CROSSES OF CASTLE DERMOT AND DURROW," by MARGARET STOKES (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis & Co.), is the first part of what promises to be when completed, as we hope it will be speedily, one of the most important works on Irish archaeology. To English antiquaries Ireland is still to a great extent a *terra incognita*, for one reason because bad hotel accommodation and slow railways make travelling more unpleasant than it need be, and also because the ancient remains there, although more abundant than in almost any other part of the United Kingdom, have been very inadequately illustrated. The result is that from the incomplete state of our information about certain classes of Irish antiquities, more especially those of the early Christian period, it is quite impossible to arrive at any definite conclusions as

to the relations between Anglo-Saxon and Celtic art in the eighth and ninth centuries. The question of whether the particular ornamental forms which are characteristic of Celtic art of the Christian period were invented in Northumbria or Scotland, and thence transferred to Ireland, or *vice versa*, still remains unanswered, for want of the necessary data to go upon. Miss Margaret Stokes has done more than anyone else to enlighten the benighted Saxon on such matters, and we hope she may be blessed with a sufficiently long life and the requisite strength to carry out the task she has so well begun. Up to the present the only book of reference on the Irish crosses has been that published many years ago by Henry O'Neill, and this is now so rare and expensive a work as to be almost inaccessible to the ordinary reader. Moreover, there are large numbers of crosses which are not illustrated by O'Neill, so that a complete monograph on the subject, such as Miss Stokes contemplates writing, is greatly wanted. Some idea of the magnitude of the work may be gathered from the fact that the first part deals with three monuments only, two at Castle Dermot, County Kildare, and one at Durrow, King's County, but it must be remembered that what is lacking in quantity is made up in quality, as each cross is most exhaustively and thoroughly dealt with. No one who has not endeavoured to produce a correct representation of an ancient sculptured stone covered with intricate patterns, worn by exposure to the weather and stained with many coloured lichens, can have any idea of how difficult a matter it is. There are several different ways of obtaining a faithful picture of one of these Irish crosses, and no doubt each worker prefers his own method. In O'Neill's day photography had not reached its present perfection, and he seems to have made freehand drawings on the spot, trusting entirely to his hand and eye for the accuracy of the details. In our opinion the best results of all are obtained by making a plaster cast of the cross, photographing the cast to scale, and reproducing the photograph by the half-tone or other process. This is, however, so expensive, that it is inapplicable in the majority of cases. An alternative plan is to take photographs, rubbings, squeezes, sketches, and measurements of the cross on the spot, and then make a finished drawing at home by the help of outlined rubbings reduced to scale by photography, the whole being corrected by the photographs, sketches, and measurements of the cross. The method Miss Stokes prefers and finds best suited to her requirements is to photograph each face of the cross in elevation (showing only one side at a time). The details, which are obscured by patches of lichen or flaws in the stone, are carefully brought out by means of a camel's hair brush and body colour. The plates by which Miss Stokes' book is illustrated are enlargements of these manipulated photographs reproduced by the half-tone process.

The letterpress contains a great deal that is new and original. The authoress's general conclusion, derived from documentary evidence, as to the purpose for which the high crosses of Ireland were erected is "that the ancient sanctuaries were marked by high crosses outside the ramparts, and

that they were under the invocation of certain saints, and offered protection to the fugitive who sought shelter under their arms." A fac-simile is given of a curious circular diagram in the ancient MS. known as the Book of Mulling, which seems to be, in all probability, nothing more or less than a ground-plan of the monastic settlement of St. Mullins, Co. Carlow, giving the positions of the crosses marking the boundaries of the sanctuary, with their dedications.

Miss Stokes is able to prove conclusively that the figure subjects found on the Irish crosses are, in the main, scriptural, and belonging to a system of iconography, in which characters taken from the Old and New Testaments are contrasted as types and anti-types. After these have been eliminated,

there still remain a certain number of representations that must be explained in another way. Some of the non-scriptural subjects seem to be taken from the life of the first abbot, or the founder of the monastery. As a case in point, Miss Stokes gives the following extremely interesting example:—



Panel on Cross-shaft at Kilcullen, with representation of MacTáil (the Son of the Adze), first Bishop.

called thenceforward' (*Tripartite Life of Patrick*, p. 250). Again, we learn that, among the wonders wrought by Patrick and his disciples, the bells made by MacTáil are enumerated (*op. cit.*, p. 185), and also that when Patrick went over into the plain of the Liffey, he placed this MacTáil over Kilcullen. In the upper panel of the high cross at Kilcullen we see a figure of a bishop with his crozier and book, who holds an axe in his hand, and whose bell hangs beside him. We may well believe that here the first bishop of the church is represented."

The hunting scenes and men driving in chariots which occur on the bases of the crosses at Kells, Co. Meath, and elsewhere, are, according to Miss Stokes, possibly symbolical of the joys of heaven, in fact, a realization of the "Happy Hunting Ground" of the North American Indian, Christianised.

We sincerely hope that the very inadequate notice we are able to give here of Miss Stokes' *magnum opus* will be the means of directing public attention to the high scientific value of her undertaking, and to the fact that

no country in Europe possesses such an unrivalled series of early Christian monuments as Great Britain and Ireland; and, to our everlasting shame be it said, no nation has done less either to protect them from injury or to illustrate their artistic beauties,

"CHRONICLES AND STORIES OF OLD BINGLEY," by HARRY SPEIGHT (Elliot Stock), is a good book quite spoilt by being cheaply bound with



Riverside View of Old Bingley, showing Church before riverside houses built.
(Block lent by the Publishers.)

metal clips. We made a vow some time ago not to notice any volume thus prevented temporarily from dropping to pieces by this extremely

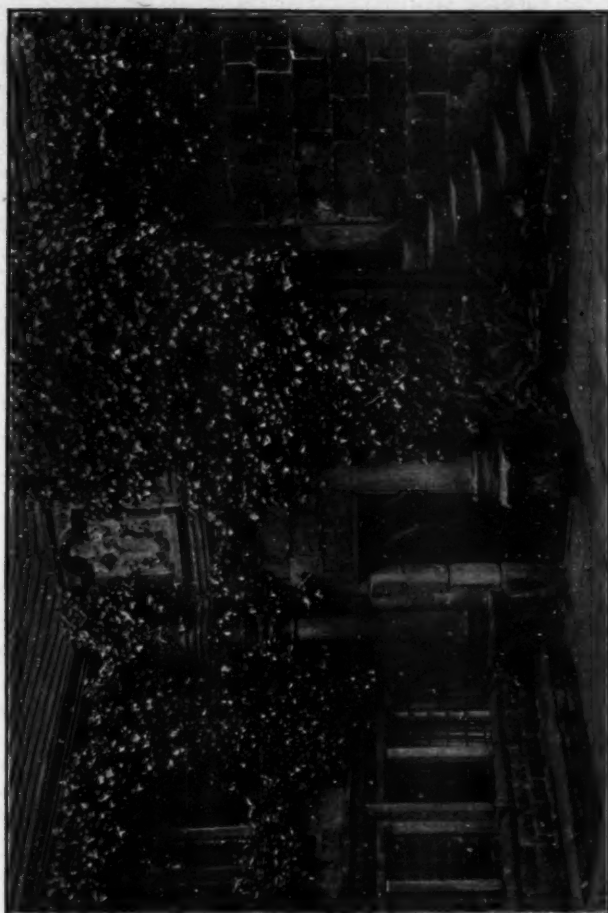
objectionable form of binding, and after this protest we intend rigidly to adhere to our resolution. It appears that Bingley is known as the "Throstle Nest of Old England," and Mr. Speight gives an illustration of the woodland scene from which it derives so poetical a name, but the throstle is rather inappropriately represented by a gentleman in a pot hat, looking most uncomfortable at being obliged to take a bird-part for the first time.



Runic Stone at Bingley
(Block lent by the Publishers.)

"Old Bingley" embodies the results of much original research amongst the archives of London, York, and Wakefield, which is rendered doubly valuable by the fact that the author is personally familiar with almost every inch of the extensive parish dealt with. The successive waves of the conquest of England by the Celt, the Roman, the Anglo-Saxon, the Dane

and the Norman have all left their impression on the neighbourhood of Bingley. Except that Mr. Speight, for some inscrutable reason, calls the pre-Aryan people the "aborigenes" (*sic*) we cannot have a better guide in following up the traces of the Celt and his successors. One of the most



Old Hard-an Grange, near present St. Ives, Bingley.
(Block lent by the Publishers.)

curious survivals of the Brit-Welsh occupation of Bingley is to be found in the old sheep-scoring numerals, of which the following instance is given :

| | | | |
|-----------|-----------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1—Era | 6—Southa | 11—Era-dicks | 16—Era-pumpit |
| 2—Tera | 7—Loutha | 12—Tera-dicks | 17—Tera-pumpit |
| 3—Tethera | 8—Cobhera | 13—Tethera-dicks | 18—Tethera-pumpit |
| 4—Fethera | 9—Dobhera | 14—Fethera-dicks | 19—Fethera-pumpit |
| 5—Pimps | 10—Dicks | 15—Pumpit | 20—Jiggit |

Still more remarkable is it that the last faint echo of the Celtic numerals should be preserved in the jingling couplet

" Ickerty, pickerty, pise a-rickety
Pomp, alarum, jig ! "

used by the Yorkshire children at the present day in the game of counting out.

Bingley possesses a relic of the times when Bingley formed part of the great Anglian kingdom of Northumbria in the shape of a stone, with traces of a Runic inscription upon it, now safely preserved within the parish church. The admirable illustration of it given by Mr. Speight (and here reproduced through the courtesy of the publishers) shows traces of an inscription which is evidently in Anglian Runes, but is so defaced as to be quite illegible. We quite agree with Mr. Speight in utterly discrediting two such completely different readings as those given by Prof. George Stephens and Father Haigh, which are as follows :—

" Eadhierht King ordered to hew this dip-stone for us. Pray thou for his soul."

" Eadberht, son of Eatta King, uttered a gracious ban. Ongus visited Bingley."

Equally at variance are the theories as to the probable use for which the stone was made. Prof. Stephens calls it a font, whilst Father Haigh asserts that it must have been the base of a memorial cross. Lastly, Mr. Speight maintains that it was a stone reliquary.

The attention of the folk-lorist should be directed to the extraordinary mock ceremony of burying St. Lawrence in effigy, the patron saint of Bingley, in revenge for the bad luck he was supposed to have brought upon the inhabitants of the district. This unpopularity of the patron is difficult to explain, unless St. Lawrence was substituted for a Celtic saint, against the feeling of the common people.

The architect will find the old Yorkshire houses well worth studying, as showing how much effect may be got out of very simple detail. It is most disheartening to think how many of these charming specimens of English domestic architecture of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are being swept away to make room for the cheap and vulgar villa of the jerry-builder. We cannot close this notice without a word of praise for the reproductions of Mr. T. W. Goodall's admirable photographs. Mr. Goodall has evidently an artist's eye for choosing a view which will make a picture.

THE latest *ARCHÆOLOGICAL REPORT* of the Egypt Exploration Fund (published, as usual, without a date) describes the work of 1897-1898. It contains less sensational matter than its predecessor, but we cannot expect an Oxyrhynchus every year. At Hierakonpolis, Mr. Quibell, working for the "Egyptian Research Account" (which with the "Fund" now exercises a sort of dual control over the archæology of Egypt, so far as English-speaking

archæologists are concerned), has found some good things. One is "the largest and earliest piece of gold sculpture yet known"—to wit, the sacred image of the hawk, with a body of copper, head and plumage of gold. This dates from the sixth or twelfth dynasty. But earlier are a huge slate palette with reliefs on both sides—undoubtedly, the finest thing of its kind—and a great mace-head (illustrated in the report), both relating to King Nar-mer. The importance of these and other similar finds for early Egyptian history is briefly indicated by Mr. Flinders Petrie. In Mr. Griffith's report everyone will read with interest the note on Borchardt's warning as to the inevitable fate of Philæ. The danger is from the salts derived from the old dwellings on the island, which, wherever the water stagnates, will surely disintegrate the stone. But we must be grateful to the Egyptian Government for condemning the temple to a lingering instead of an immediate destruction. Mr. Kenyon's report contains brief notes on Bacchylides (quite the best thing, from a purely literary point of view, that the hunters of papyri have bagged), and the first volume of the Oxyrhynchus papyri. Scrappy as the latter are, they have an extraordinary interest, both as literature and as illustrating life in Greek and Roman Egypt.

"FORGOTTEN CHILDREN'S BOOKS," by ANDREW W. TUEB, F.S.A. (Leadenhall Press), although perhaps not a work which it is necessary for the



Block from *Forgotten Children's Books*.
(Lent by the Publishers.)

antiquary to study seriously, is one from which he is certain to derive much amusement, and may collect many useful facts bearing on things now obsolete, and places entirely changed in appearance during the last century or so. Mr. Tuer presents us with a series of process reproductions of pages and pictures selected from the books that were the delight of our grandfathers and grandmothers in their childish days. One of these, entitled, *Ellen, or the Naughty Girl Reclaimed*, was a special favourite with Her Majesty the Queen-Empress of England. Neither as regards the artistic merits of the illustrations, nor the literary style of the letterpress, are these books to be particularly commended, judging from the samples placed before us by



Block from *Forgotten Children's Books*.
(Lent by the Publishers.)

Mr. Tuer. Whatever their defects may have been, however, they were probably quite as much appreciated by the youngsters of a past generation as are the more ambitious attempts of Kate Greenaway or Walter Crane by the children of to-day.

We need not here dwell on the unctuous piety and priggishness of the heroes of many of these tales, as they have been already sufficiently satirised by Mark Twain in his story of the good boy, and by the genial Editor of *Punch* in the *New Sandford and Merton*. The only possible interest of the "unco' guid" class of children's books, is that they are perhaps the last survival of the system of moralising which pervades so much of the literature

of the Middle Ages. It is most probable that in nine cases out of ten the effect produced upon the youthful reader, by the moral, was exactly the opposite from the one intended by the author; as, for instance, in the case of *The Good Boy's Soliloquy*, where on the one side we see a juvenile prig of the first water, saying to himself—

"The things my parents bid me do
Let me attentively pursue,"



From *Modern London*, 1805.
(Lent by the Leadenhall Press, Ltd.)

whilst by way of contrast, we are shown a young fiend, drawing a caricature, and, as if to add extra zest to the performance, he is soliloquising—

"I must not ugly faces scrawl,
With charcoal, on a white-washt wall."

We feel sure that every healthy-minded child will undoubtedly throw its sympathies entirely on the side of the embryo Phil May.

The representations to be found in many of these children's books of the life, costume, occupations, and amusements of our ancestors, have a permanent value, which will increase as years roll on. Amongst places of entertainment



From the *Rebellious School Girl*, 1821.
(Lent by the Leadenhall Press, Ltd.)

now no longer in existence, we have pictures of the menagerie at Exeter Change, Vauxhall Gardens, and Astley's Amphitheatre. The advance which has been made during the present century in the means of locomotion is well illustrated by the engravings of the hobby horse of 1819, and the locomotive of 1825 on the Stockton and Darlington railway.

"MIDDLESEX AND HERTFORDSHIRE NOTES AND QUERIES" has proved so successful a venture under the able editorship of Mr. W. J. HARDY, F.S.A., that the proprietors of this popular quarterly propose to extend its scope so as to include Essex, Bucks, Berks, Surrey, and Kent. Henceforth the publication will be known as the *Home Counties Magazine*. We wish it every success and a long life. By the way, Vol. I. for 1895 of *Middlesex and Hertfordshire Notes and Queries* is out of print, and sells for 25s. This fact should appeal to persons endowed with the commercial instinct, whose intellects are too small to enable them to understand a love of archaeology for its own sake. The October number contains an illustration of the beautiful arcaded Norman font in Hendon parish church.

THE ANNUAL REPORT AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE BARROW NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB for 1897 is decidedly above the average of the publications of similar societies. It is well got up, and the illustrations are good. Amongst other papers will be found one upon a "Deed of Surrender of St. Mary of Furness, County of Lancaster," by Dr. T. K. Fell and Harper Gaythorpe, F.S.A. Scot., with fac-similes of the document and its seal.

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE HAMPSHIRE FIELD CLUB for 1898 is edited by the Rev. G. W. MINNS, LL.D., F.S.A., and bound with wire clips.

THE FOURTH AND FIFTH REPORTS OF THE DARTMOOR EXPLORATION COMMITTEE, THE SIXTEENTH REPORT OF THE BARROW COMMITTEE, AND DARTMOOR STONE IMPLEMENTS AND WEAPONS (re-printed from the *Transactions of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science*) are well worthy of the attention of anyone who is interested in studying the culture of Neolithic man in the West of England. Explorations such as those described, when conducted on scientific principles on ancient inhabited sites, are specially valuable as revealing the conditions under which the inhabitants of Dartmoor lived during the late Stone and early Bronze Ages. Even the mere pot-hunter will appreciate the highly decorated urn found in a barrow at Fernworthy. But it has a greater interest than its suitability to adorn the cabinet of the collector. The urn is of well-known Bronze Age type, and the finding of a fragment of bronze and a Kimmeridge coal dress-fastener in the same barrow helps to fix the period more definitely. As the barrow is closely associated with circles and parallel rows of upright stones the inference appears to be that some at least of the megalithic monuments on Dartmoor belong to the Bronze Age.

"A GUIDE TO THE ROMAN CITY OF URICONIUM," by G. E. FOX, F.S.A. (Shrewsbury, Adnitt and Naunton), will be found most useful to antiquaries and others who visit the remains at Wroxeter. This is one of the few local

guides which is written by a recognised authority. A map showing the position of the ruins, and a plan of the excavations made from 1859 to 1896, adds to the completeness of the guide.

"BOOK PRICES CURRENT, 1898." (London: Elliot & Stock.) This volume requires no more than mention at our hands. To book-buyers it is an essential; and, perhaps, especially so to that section of the book-purchasing community who are antiquaries. The sales reported comprise the second and third portions of the Ashburnham Library.

News Items and Comments.

REMARKS AND CRITICISMS BY CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. R. BLAIR, F.S.A., writes: "I notice on the first page of the October number of the *Reliquary* that Ilkley is styled *Olicana* in Iter VII. of Richard of Cirencester. Evidently the writer is not aware that Richard of Cirencester is a rank forgery, and should not be quoted as an authority in this way, as it simply perpetuates the evil."

✱ ✱ ✱

A similar protest has been recently made in the *Athenæum*, by Mr. F. Haverfield, F.S.A., with regard to an article on Roman roads in the *Nineteenth Century*. Alas that such great authorities should tilt against error in vain.

✱ ✱ ✱

We have received the following communications with regard to Vamping Trumpets.

"Re your *Reliquary* article upon Vamping Trumpets. I beg to say that there is, or was until very recently, a large one in a village called Leake, near to Loughboro'. I will drive over and see, and if it is still preserved, will endeavour to photograph it for Miss F. Peacock.

W. TRUAMAN TUCKER."

✱ ✱ ✱

"In the last number of the *Reliquary* it is stated in an article on 'Vamping Trumpets' that only four exist. May I inform you that another may be seen in the Church of East Leake, Notts. This is about 7½ ft. long, the bell 1½ ft. in diameter, and is made of stout tin, with a telescope slide. It was exhibited in the Inventions Exhibition in 1885, and is said to have been last used in 1850, in the choir.

"I have since heard of two other Vamping Horns now in private hands: one, till recently, with the Rector of a Somersetshire church; this is almost the exact counterpart of the East Leake trumpet: the

other is in the hands of the parish clerk of a Derbyshire village. In both these cases the trumpet had been used, as the Willoughton one formerly was, to call the labourers from work. Doubtless others exist, but fail to be recognised properly.

HENRY E. BELCHER."

RECENT DISCOVERIES AND EXPLORATIONS.

At the meeting of the Society of Antiquaries on November 24th, Mr. P. Norman, Treasurer, read an account of the discovery, at Millfield, Keston, Kent, of a shallow, circular pit containing nearly a thousand chips, flakes, and cores of flint. The site had evidently been a factory of Neolithic implements, as the fragments of flint were such as would have resulted from the manufacture of chipped implements. Mr. Norman drew attention to the fact that a very large proportion of the well-shaped flakes had lost their pointed end, consisting of about one-fourth or one-third part of the entire flake. This had evidently been broken off purposely, and, as none of the points were found among the *débris*, while many butt-ends remained, it seemed probable that the flakes were produced for the sake of their points. These were broken off and used as arrow-heads, or for some purpose requiring sharp angular points, and thus dispersed about the surface of the surrounding country. A number of cores from which the flakes had been struck, and some large pebbles which had apparently served as hammers for detaching the flakes therefrom, were found lying among the fragments of flint on what must have been the floor of a Neolithic workshop. The hut in which this ancient industry was carried on was about fourteen feet in diameter, and its site was found under an accumulation of earth about two feet thick. Evidence was given that the Millfield pit formed one of the remarkable group of Neolithic hut circles on Hayes Common, some of which had been excavated and described ten years ago by Mr. George Clinch. In the discussion which followed, to which the President, the Secretary, and Sir Henry Howorth contributed, it was mentioned that a very much larger find of a somewhat similar character had been made at Grovehurst, near Sittingbourne, in 1871 by Mr. George Payne. It was also suggested that the sharp points of flint may have been employed as the teeth of sickles, in the same way as they are known to have been among the ancient Egyptians.



At the meeting of the Society of Antiquaries held at Burlington House, December 1st, the fellows had an opportunity of inspecting two wooden chairs which, if tradition is to be believed, date back to the period when Christianity was introduced into England at the end of the sixth century. The first of these has long been known as the chair of the Venerable Bede at Jarrow, but the second has only recently established a claim to be the very identical seat in which St. Augustine sat when in A.D. 602 he held a

conference or synod with the British bishops at a place called to this day "Augustine's Oak," on the confines of the Huicil and West Saxons (*Bede Ecl. Hist.*, Bk. ii., ch. 2). The late Professor E. A. Freeman calls these people the Hwiccas, and tells us that they inhabited Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, and part of Warwickshire. It will be remembered that Ethelwealh, the first Christian King of Sussex, married Eaba, a Princess of the Hwiccas. Stanford Bishop, where the reputed chair of St. Augustine was found, is situated just beyond the Malvern Hills, near Bromyard, Herefordshire, so that if not actually within the boundary of the kingdom of the Hwiccas it was not far outside it. The chair now belongs to Mr. E. Cocks Johnston, of Cheltenham, it having been bought by one of his relations from the parish clerk when the church of Stanford Bishop was restored some time ago. The chair is constructed of pieces of oak, 1 and 2 ins. thick, and fitted together entirely by mortice and tenon joints, fixed with oak pins, thus dispensing altogether with glue, nails, or screws. The chair is 2 ft. 7 ins. high by 2 ft. 4½ ins. wide by 1 ft. 6 ins. deep. It is extremely archaic in appearance, and as it is entirely devoid of ornament or mouldings it might be put down to almost any age. The seat of the chair works upon a hinge, so that there appears to have been a receptacle of some kind below, as in the ecclesiastical chairs from Norway, of which there is a fine example in the Copenhagen Museum. The so-called chair of the Venerable Bede from Jarrow is very rudely constructed, but except tradition there is nothing by which its age can be fixed with any degree of certainty. The most ancient ecclesiastical chair in England is the stone Frid Stool at Hexham, Northumberland, which has interlaced ornament upon it, and is certainly pre-Norman. Next in age to this, perhaps, comes a thirteenth century wooden chair at Dunmow Priory, and then a fifteenth century chair at Glastonbury Abbey. There are numerous examples of representations of chairs or thrones of the Saxon period in ancient MSS., but they have in nearly all cases been copied from Byzantine originals. King David, the Blessed Virgin, and the Four Evangelists are most usually represented as seated on a chair of Byzantine type. On a cross-slab of the eighth or ninth century at Dunfallandy, Perthshire, however, two ecclesiastics are shown sitting on chairs of purely Celtic design. The most ancient ecclesiastical chair known is that at St. Peter's at Rome, the decorations of which are in the classical style of the pagan period.